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Limbaugh on Buckley — p. 55

C'mon, Baby — Do the Multilateral

NATIONAL REVIEW

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NATIONAL REVIEW

OCTOBER 4, 1993 VOL. XLV, NO. 19

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LETTERS

Whose Welfare?

In his recent article on welfare reform ["They Had a Dream," Aug. 23], my friend Tom Bethell caricatures my argument for ending cash welfare and replacing it with the guarantee of a WPA-style job. "To get the Kausian picture," Bethell writes, "imagine a construction site with pregnant mums under the supervision of a Lou Gossett–type drill sergeant. The very unthinkableness of it brings irresponsible males rushing over from their gang-warfare activities . . . Kaus's admirable goal is to shame them into coming to the rescue, picking up shovels, going to work, marrying the women."

That's not the argument. The point isn't that if single mothers have to work, men will be shamed into marrying them. The point is that if single mothers have to work (instead of receiving cash welfare checks as they do now) far fewer young women will become single mothers in the first place. The prospect of juggling motherhood and a not-very-lucrative job will make them think twice about having a child out of wedlock, and they will begin to demand that the men in their lives offer them stable economic support. The natural incentives to form two-parent families will reassert themselves.

Charles Murray, who can hardly be accused of being insufficiently hard-nosed on this subject, has written that "If Kaus's plan were implemented as is, it would work." Does Bethell have a better solution?

Mickey Kaus
The New Republic
Washington, D.C.

I would abolish welfare entirely. But I realize that is not in the congressional cards. Nor, I suspect, is Kaus's plan to make single motherhood less attractive. It might "work," but the soft compromise that inevitably emerges from such a proposal only makes things worse. —TB

What a Rush!

Ditto most of James Bowman's article about Rush Limbaugh ["The Leader of the Opposition," Sept. 6]. Merry prankster? Unifying voice of conservatives? Probably both, but Rush is actually the John the Baptist for the real leader to come. In his defeat, George Bush snuffed out the Rockefeller wing of the Republican Party, and Bill Clinton is killing the Democrats. America's exciting future belongs to a pro-growth advocate of limited government. Hats off to Rush for preparing the way.

Martin Keating
Tulsa, Okla.

Your cover story on Rush Limbaugh quotes me as saying, "Only comedians can say a lot of the things that are on people's minds these days. Limbaugh can say the things he does because people don't take him seriously." This quotation is taken out of context, and does not reflect my high opinion of Limbaugh's extraordinary contributions to America's pubic discourse.

I was praising Limbaugh, not criticizing him, when I suggested to your author that he consider why humorists such as Limbaugh and P. J. O'Rourke can express so much conservative wisdom more effectively than can conservative political leaders. In Shakespeare's plays, the wisest comments often come from the court jester. So, too, on our political stage, a comedian with a twinkle in his eye and a grin on his face can voice serious truths and still be taken very seriously—as Limbaugh is, by tens of millions of Americans, including me.

Adam Meyerson
Policy Review
Washington, D.C.

North and South in Somalia

Ian Alexander may indeed be a "longtime observer of the Middle East," but some of his observations on Somalia were simply wrong ["Rebuilding a Shattered Land," May 24].

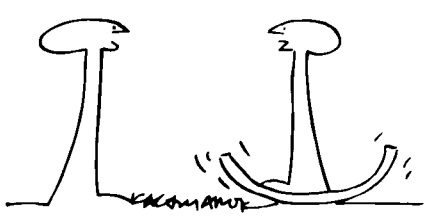
First, Hargeisa, the capital of the self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland, was not "once bigger and more prosperous than Mogadishu," the capital of Somalia. Mogadishu dates to the tenth century and was a city state as early as the fifteenth. On the other hand, there were hardly any people living in Hargeisa before the British arrived to govern the north in the nineteenth century. As for prosperity, although there was vibrant commercial activity in Hargeisa (owing to livestock trade), it could never match Mogadishu, which was the seat of the national government and the center of Western donor agencies, as well as the main port for all of southern Somalia.

Second, although it is true that, as Mr. Alexander argues, "most Somali leaders [including Omer Arteh Ghalib] collaborated with [former dictator] Siad Barre in the early years," this is not why Somalis in the breakaway republic in the North distrust Mr. Ghalib. It is because he is still part of the central government in Mogadishu which bombed northerners in the summer of 1988. According to Africa Watch, the bombardment of Hargeisa and other northern cities, populated by Mr. Ghalib's Isaak tribe, killed at least 50,000 people.

It is, therefore, understandable that northerners see Mr. Ghalib as someone who put his personal and political ambitions before the interest of his people who suffered under Siad Barre.

Abdulrahman Abdi
College Park, Md.

My statement about Hargeisa's size relative to Mogadishu's refers to the period after World War I, when the British oversaw the buildup of the city to about 700,000. More to the point, however, Mr. Abdi is evidently unaware that during the 1988 bombardment of Hargeisa, when Omer Arteh Ghalib was supposedly conniving to bomb his own people, he was in fact ending six years' solitary confinement and entering more than a year of house arrest by Barre. Arteh's 1991–93 service as prime minister followed unanimous election by a council of one hundred elders, including some forty northerners, on January 27, 1991, the day after Siad Barre had finally been driven into exile. *Moreover, at the July 1991 Djibouti conference of six of the seven groups that had worked for Barre's expulsion (including three from the north), Arteh's election was unanimously re-certified by the widest cross-section of Somali leaders yet assembled.* —IA



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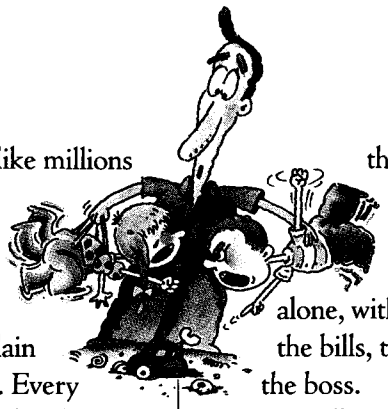

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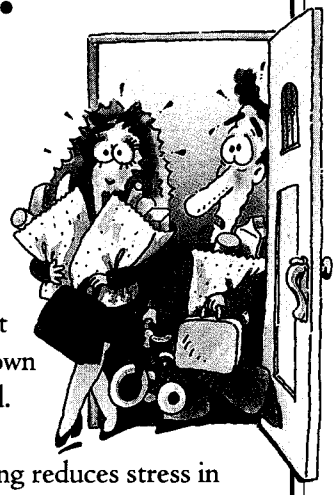

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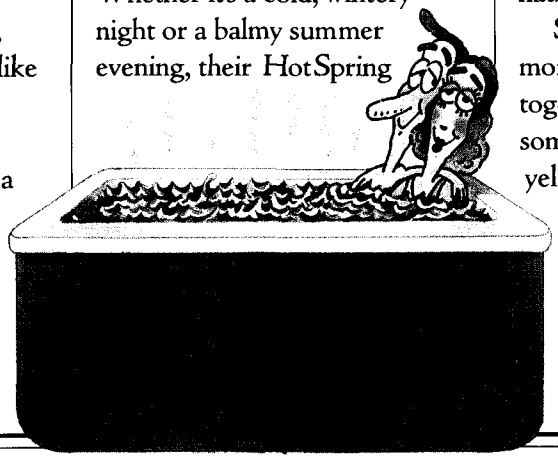

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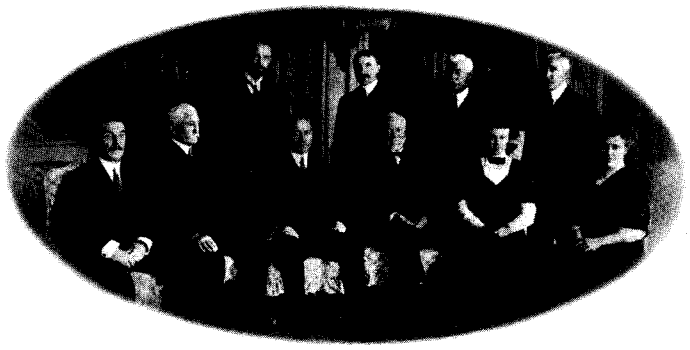

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FROM THE EDITOR

Trading Places

■ "Just who has been won round to support NAFTA by these side agreements on environmentalism and workers' rights?" said a strong supporter of NAFTA to me last week. "Whose vote has been gained? Give me names."

I passed.

"I'll tell you: Bill Clinton. As a result of the agreements, *he* is now prepared to support NAFTA. But Republicans are jumping ship. Great tactics."

Not that my Republican friend could gloat. After all, the President is relying on Republican votes to pass NAFTA, yet all his concessions are going to Democrats. That hardly suggests great tactics on the GOP's part.

Still, the complaint showed that the NAFTA debate has taken an interesting turn. Until recently, it had a reassuring simplicity. Free-traders were for NAFTA; protectionists against it. And that was more or less that.

Since NATIONAL REVIEW is committed to free trade on both libertarian *and* nationalist grounds (i.e., it strengthens the American economy as well as giving the American consumer the freedom to buy what he wants at a price he is prepared to pay), we are instinctively in the NAFTA camp.

True, even strong NAFTA supporters worry that NAFTA might prove a step toward a world divided into three protectionist blocs built on NAFTA, Japan, and the European Community. But that is a battle we foresaw being joined after passage.

But the side agreements raise new questions. Will NAFTA-Plus allow international commissions to impose a greater level of regulation on U.S. industry than is already imposed by domestic regulators? Or will they be merely paper bodies with no mechanisms to enforce their decisions, designed principally to protect congressional Democrats against their "green" and labor constituencies?

This questioning has in turn led to a re-examination of the original treaty, which many are now reading—or at least reading about—for the first time. It is, after all, a document of more than a thousand pages and innumerable provisions decipherable only by lawyers and trade bureaucrats.

Do these complicated provisions extend free trade? Or do they amount to "managed trade"? Is NAFTA a trade-creating program with no losers? Or a trade-diverting one in which U.S. and Mexican producers will benefit at the expense of more efficient manufacturers in Asia or Western Europe? And whichever it is, what is the balance of economic advantage for the American economy and consumer?

And what of NAFTA's effect south of the border? Will it demonstrate U.S. goodwill for Mexico and lock in the free-market reforms of President Salinas? Or cripple Mexico's recent economic progress by imposing high-cost regulations that a developing country simply cannot afford?

As a result, the battle-lines have become confused. Free-traders like the Competitive Enterprise Institute's James Sheehan now rub shoulders with protectionists like Ross Perot in the anti-NAFTA camp; while statist interventionists like Laura Tyson, chairman of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors, join forces with their critics like the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page to support NAFTA.

In one respect, things will get better. Until now, the debate has been conducted along demagogic lines—from Ross Perot's absurd "big sucking sound" to President Bush's unworthy suggestion that opponents of NAFTA are inspired by anti-Mexican racism. With free-traders and free-marketeers now on both sides of the divide, the level of discussion should improve.

NATIONAL REVIEW will make up its own mind in the forthcoming four issues. In addition to publishing signed articles on NAFTA, we will run a series of editorials examining the questions raised above. After which we will advise our congressman on how to vote.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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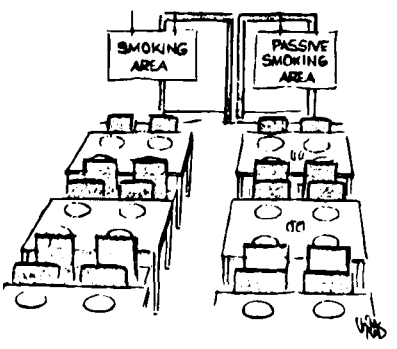
FOR THE RECORD

■ Opponents of lifting ban on homosexuals in the military enjoyed overwhelming victory in the Senate. Attempt by **Barbara Boxer** (D., Calif.) to leave the question up to the President was rejected 63 to 33; senators instead accepted language crafted by **Sam Nunn** (D., Ga.) and **Dan Coats** (R., Ind.) of Armed Services Committee, which Pentagon lawyers believe will make ban far more difficult to strike down in court. **Pat Schroeder** (D., Colo.) will continue to push in House for lifting the ban, but is not expected to succeed. . . . Longtime liberal Sen. **Chris Dodd** (D,. Conn.) is demanding a major Senate chairmanship, saying he will not run for a fourth term in 1998 if he doesn't get it, reports *New Haven Register*'s **Bob Conrad**. . . . Democrats are lining up federal judgeship for Arizona Sen. **Dennis DeConcini** in case of his likely defeat next year. . . . Polls show Utah voters would like an end to tenure of three-term Sen. **Orrin Hatch** (R.): only 38 per cent feel he should run again; 52 per cent would like to see someone new. Two-term conservative Democratic Rep. **William Orton** (ACU: 63) plans to challenge Hatch; Orton is frustrated with liberal House leadership blocking him from good committee assignments. . . . Former New Jersey Gov. **Tom Kean** has decided not to seek GOP nomination to challenge two-term Sen. **Frank Lautenberg**. Early leader for GOP nomination: conservative Rep. **Dick Zimmer**. . . . On the Left: former National Institutes of Health director **Bernadine Healy**, upon her entrance into the Ohio Republican senatorial primary, criticized her two conservative opponents, **Mike DeWine** and **Eugene Watts**, for "blind allegiance to failed policies of the past," referring, it seems, to policies of her former boss **Ronald Reagan**.

■ The entrance of **Gerald Solomon** (R., N.Y), **Bob Michel**'s friend and ally, into race for Michel's leadership position suggests that the seemingly permanent House minority leader intends to go back to Illinois at term's end. **Newt Gingrich** (Ga.) has long let it be known he intends to run even if Michel doesn't step down. Also tossing his hat in is twenty-year conservative House veteran **Henry Hyde** (Ill.). . . . In Rhode Island, liberal Republican **Robert Machtley** has decided to give up his House seat to challenge Democratic Gov. **Bruce Sundlun**. Seems likely that 32-year-old son of Sen. **Edward Kennedy**, **Patrick**, now a state legislature, will take seat, making first father–son duo in Congress since **Barry Goldwater Sr.** and **Jr.** were in Senate and House. . . . Far-Left Rep. **John Conyers** (D., Mich.), who lost seat in 1989, then was re-elected in 1992, failed in attempt to replace retiring Mayor **Coleman Young** in Detroit.

■ While in Washington, PLO Chairman **Yasir Arafat** met with officials from the World Bank to ask for financial assistance—warning that without it his territories could go the way of some former Soviet republics, and he the way of **Gorbachev**. **Bill Clinton**'s gaffe—questioning the new Israeli–PLO agreement as news first emerged with the comment, "there's been a lot of these things before"—emphasizes that United States had no clue about 14 secret meetings in Norway to set it up. . . . Bishop **Bechara Rai** of Jbeil, Lebanon, told Vatican Radio that his country is being "Islamicized" through land purchases by powerful Moslem groups and a growing exclusion of Christians from government. . . . **Rupert Murdoch** has sold his control of Hong Kong cash cow, the *South China Morning Post*, to **Robert Kuok**, a Malaysian Chinese with strong ties to Peking. Murdoch hopes to get blessing of Communist Chinese for his proposed expansion into Asian television when Hong Kong goes Chinese in 1997. . . . Former German Chancellor **Helmut Schmidt** says economic reunification of East and West Germany can come in 15 to 20 years. But "trying to get the same answer to the question 'What is a German?' from a man in Dresden and a man from Aix-la-Chapelle [Aachen] will take maybe 40 years." . . . Although Bavarian Interior Minister **Günter Beckstein** says applications for political asylum have dwindled under a new immigration law, the number of illegals is growing rapidly.



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■ **National Empowerment Television** is accepting application for internships for all aspects of TV production and broadcast. Fall session begins October 11. For info, contact **Glay Lindsay** or **Peter Gaillard** at 717 Second Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002. . . . Rockford Institute will award **Ingersoll** prizes November 5 in Chicago. Its **T. S. Eliot** Award for Creative Writing will be given to novelist and poet **Fred Chappell**; the **Richard M. Weaver** Award for Scholarly Letters will be given to repentant **Stalin**ist, *NR* contributor, and historian **Eugene Genovese**. . . . **California Civil Rights Institute** has proposed amendment to state constitution that would prohibit use of race, religion, etc., as reason for giving preferential treatment to anyone employed by or being considered for state job. Contact CCRI at P. O. Box 11795, Berkeley, Calif. 94701-2795; 510-644-4256. . . . CPAC is holding West Coast conference, October 22–24, at L.A.'s Biltmore Hotel. **Rush Limbaugh**, **Bill Bennett**, and **Ronald Reagan** (by video) are scheduled speakers. To learn more, call 818-577-7203.

■ Newest hit in Washington is the *Stephanopouletter*—fan-club newsletter of Clinton aide **George Stephanopoulos**. Look for fashion tips, handwriting analyses, and continuous updates on his love life.

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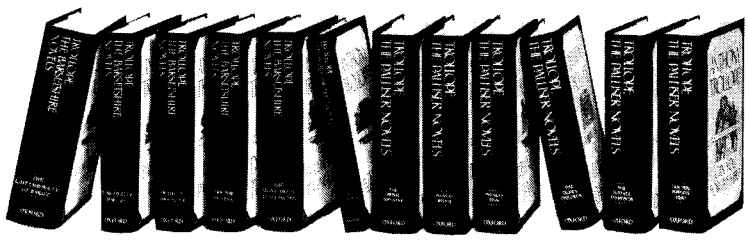

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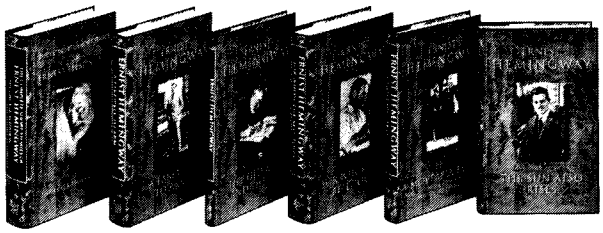

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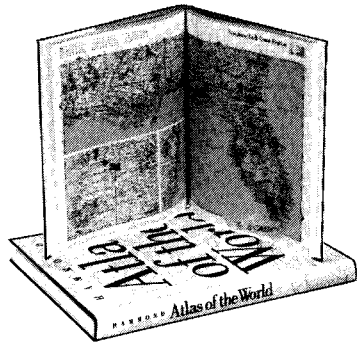

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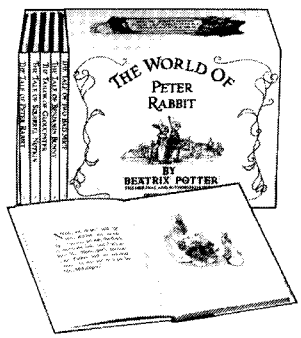

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THE WEEK

■ Come now. If half of all Americans are illiterate, how come Bill Clinton only got 43 per cent?

■ The Senate will lose one of its most effective conservatives when Malcolm Wallop of Wyoming retires at the end of his current term. Senator Wallop, favored for re-election, announced that he won't seek a fourth term because Wyoming voted for term limitation last November. Although as an incumbent he was grandfathered, Mr. Wallop decided to impose the limitation on himself, stating that his constituents "have correctly identified the problem of an arrogant, insensitive government, overbearing and ever-present and strangely unhelpful." Malcolm Wallop is the latest advocate of limited government to limit his own term of office. In 1990, Senators Bill Armstrong, Jim McClure, and Gordon Humphrey called it quits; Senator Steve Symms followed suit in 1992. The Senate would be a more conservative body if those four senior members had returned. Currently, a third of Congress represents states that have passed term limits. We must hope that the term-limitation movement continues. Otherwise, while principled conservatives bid adieu to Washington, their liberal colleagues will sit tight and accumulate seniority.

■ The First Amendment may soon be put on hold. The roaring success of Rush Limbaugh, Pat Buchanan, Pat Robertson, and other conservative broadcasters has some members of Congress, such as Senator Ernest Hollings (D., S.C.) growling about reviving the "fairness doctrine" to require equal time for . . . well, what? Mr. Limbaugh spends much of his time attacking shifty politicians. Does this mean proportionate airtime for shifty politicians? The Christian Right poses a subtler problem: What's the opposite of the Christian Right? The Christian Left? The secular Left? Buddhism? Atheism? Satanism? The trouble is that this conceptual problem would be resolved not by philosophers, but by guys like Senator Hollings.

■ When Vice President Gore appeared on the *Late Show* with David Letterman, he declined to display a widely reported ability to balance a broom on his chin. His handlers won't say why, but we suspect it has something to do with avoiding confusion: Which is the broom, and which the Vice President?

■ The *New York Times* in August came up with a bogus exposé of a series of tests of President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative in 1984. The *Times* claimed that the tests were rigged to create the impression of a successful anti-missile "hit," intentionally to deceive the Soviets on the progress of the program and unintentionally deceiving Congress in the process. Defense Secretary Aspin ordered an investigation, and on September 9 disclosed the results: the tests were not rigged; no deception of Congress occurred. Mr. Aspin's predecessor, Cap Weinberger, waits for an apology from the *New York Times*. And waits, and waits . . .

■ The Clinton Administration is touting the sharp plunge in long-term interest rates as a vote of confidence in the budget package. But recent interest-rate declines are best understood in the context of supply and demand. The Federal Reserve has supplied enormous amounts of credit to the banking system, pumping up the monetary base at double-digit rates for more than two years now. In normal economic times this cheap credit would be snapped up to finance factories, new businesses, automobiles, and housing. But Mr. Clinton's budget has scared both businessmen and consumers, producing debt growth far below the levels usually reached at this stage in expansions. The dearth of live borrowers has forced banks to divert their funds to the financial markets, bidding up bond prices and pushing

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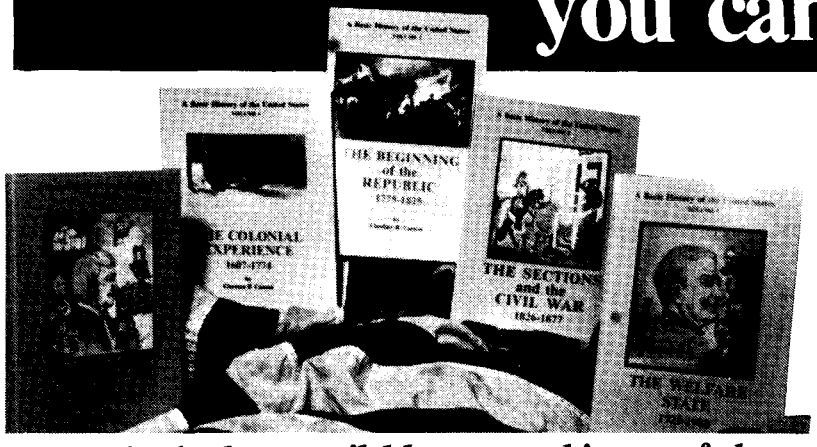

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interest rates on thirty-year Treasury bonds to their lowest levels ever. So Mr. Clinton is claiming credit for a situation in which, for the first time in recent history, banks are lending more money to the Federal Government than to American businesses.

■ On MTV's *The Week in Rock* on August 28, Snapple co-founder Arnold Greenberg denied two rumors plaguing his company: "One [rumor] is that we support the KKK, [but] the most vicious rumor . . . is that we donate money to right-to-life causes."

■ A second Soviet document has been unearthed suggesting that the North Vietnamese held hundreds more American POWs than they ever acknowledged (or released). This is a Soviet copy of a North Vietnamese Central Committee report from late 1970 citing the detention of 735 U.S. "flyers," while (as the document states) only 368 were being acknowledged. This reinforces the September 1972 report to the Hanoi Politburo unearthed earlier this year by researcher Stephen J. Morris, which spoke of 1,205 U.S. POWs toward the end of the war—more than double the 591 released under the Paris Agreement. The Clinton policy of gradual expansion of contacts with Hanoi becomes more embarrassing every day. The theory is that such contacts facilitate "progress" on an accounting for our MIAs. But if the Soviet documents are real, Hanoi has been lying to us for more than twenty years—*and is still doing so.* This being the case, the two U.S. officials now posted in Hanoi should be brought home and diplomatic contacts suspended until Hanoi starts owning up to its past deceit instead of perpetuating it.

■ It has to be one of the most shameful moments in the history of American foreign policy: Alija Izetbegovic, the Muslim President of desperate Bosnia, met with Bill Clinton in the Oval Office on September 8 and listened to an earful of excuses why the United States was doing nothing to come to his country's aid. This was the same Bill Clinton who had campaigned on the promise to save Bosnia from Serb depredations, the same Bill Clinton who as President had promised at various times to use force for the same end. "Congress would have to agree," the President lied—this being the same Bill Clinton who is fending off congressional attempts to limit his military actions in Somalia. In any case, the only military move under consideration in Bosnia is the foolish idea of sending 25,000 U.S. troops to police the settlement now in the works—namely, a Bosnian surrender. Let's hope the smell of betrayal wasn't still in the Oval Office air a few days later when the Israelis and Palestinians were there, launching their hazardous enterprise in reliance on the steadfastness of the United States.

■ We hesitate to guess his opinion of *NR*, but Kurt Cobain, lead singer of the grunge band Nirvana (*you* know, the guys who put Seattle and plaid shirts on the map), is mad at *Vanity Fair* because, in its September 1992 profile of his wife, Courtney Love (of the girl grunge band Hole), writer Lynn Hirschberg mentioned rumors that Mrs. Cobain was shooting heroin while pregnant with their child. After brooding for a year, Mr. Cobain charges the *VF* crowd are "a bunch of right-wing, high-fashion Christian Satanists. They have the power to eliminate anything that threatens them." Condé Nast, welcome to the Reagan coalition.

■ At a cost of $650,000 a day, the President and Vice President and retinues set forth in government jets, to campaign for steamlining the government.

Does Miss Tyson Know?

As old coots sick of 3 per cent
Pile into funds to pay the rent,
The managers, awash in cash,
Charge at the market with a dash
Not seen since Cardigan, who made
Chopped liver of the Light Brigade.

W. H. VON DREELE

Accounting for Health Care

AS THE rough beast of the Clinton health plan slouches ever closer, it is well to ask how it—and we—got here. The plan and the political calculations underlying it rest upon beliefs about America's health care that just ain't so.

The first is that the present system is riddled with vast gaps. This is an exaggeration at best. Statistics on immunization or life expectancy are often compared with those of other First World countries, to our discredit. But if the American underclass is subtracted from the pool, the United States comes out on top. Our numbers are dragged down by a class of people who don't get inoculations even when they are free. Tragic as this is, it is a problem of social policy, not of health care. Similarly, 37 million Americans are said to lack health insurance. But millions of these are healthy twenty-somethings who are betting they won't be maimed in an accident or struck by a freak disease. Even with them, the number of Americans who lack insurance for more than one year is only eight million. A problem? Certainly. A catastrophe? By no means.

The second assumption is that our costs are

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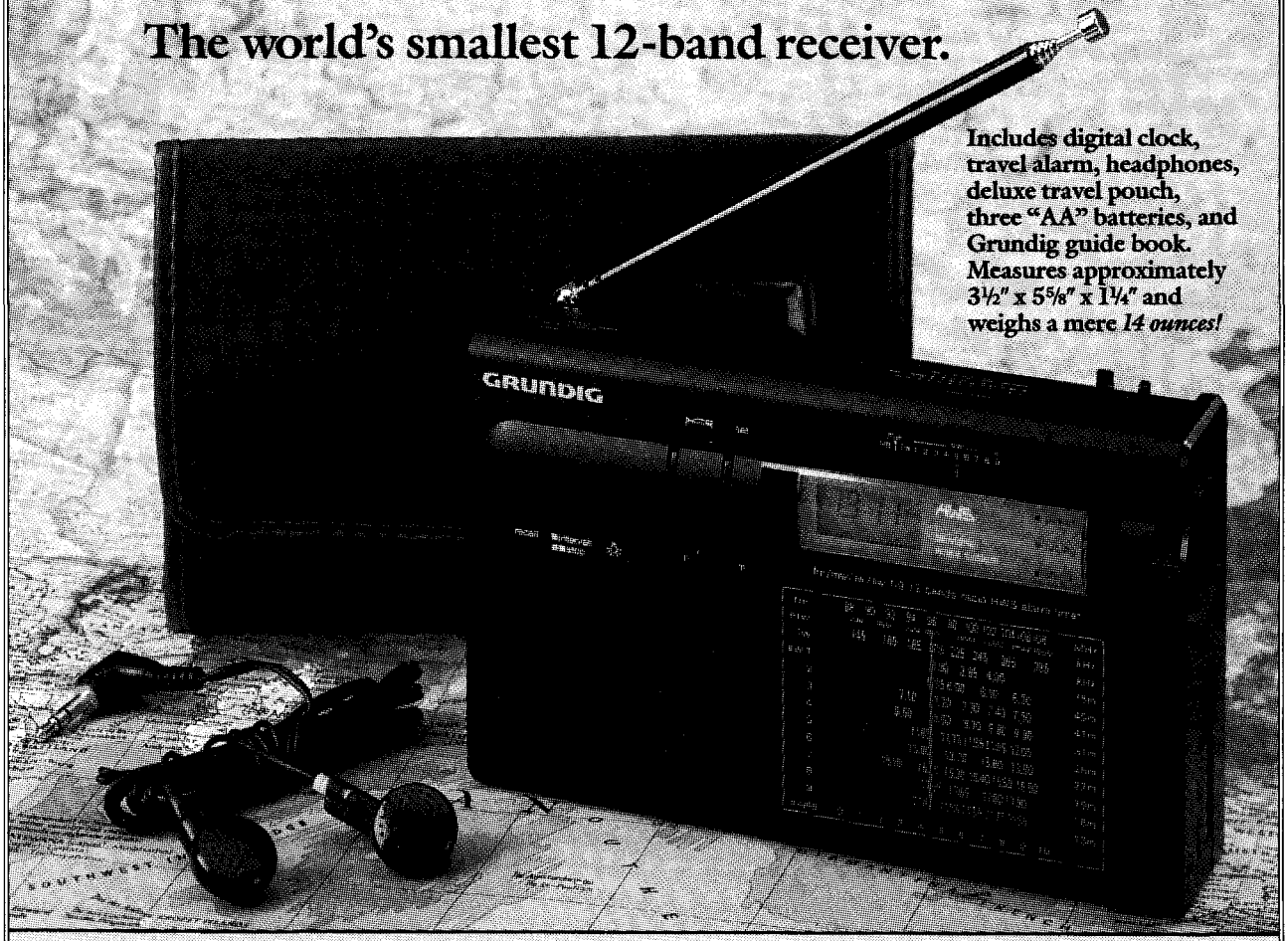

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grossly higher than those elsewhere. Some individual procedures cost more here because they achieve more. Hillary Clinton's jeremiad against the greed of drug companies earlier in the year ignored the fact that more expensive American immunizations guard against more illnesses. And the raw statistics generally do not compare like with like. Japan controls doctors' fees, and so people get the doctors they want by paying fat tips—off the books. German health expenses for foreign-born guest workers show up not on the health budget, but on the welfare budget. Canadians nip over the southern border for procedures they can't get at home. British waiting lists hold down expenditures at the cost of patients' pain. And so on.

That said, Americans have still seen their expenses rise. But we face an insurance crisis, not a health-care crisis. The system of third-party payment, funneled through employers, insulates consumers from the expense of treatment, allowing costs to spiral. Americans see the result indirectly, in shrunken paychecks and in the loss of job mobility. Reform plans, offered by the Heritage Foundation and the Cato Institute, propose to shift expenses and tax credits from employers to employees, thus introducing consumers and providers to each other, and both to economic reality. Given this education, workers would tend to opt for the sensible remedy—catastrophic-illness policies with high deductibles. Inflationary pressures might then abate.

Are congressional Republicans aware of these options, and do they have the guts to push for them? Led by Senator John Chafee, who is in turn encouraged by Robert Dole, the GOP seems eager to appear at Bill and Hillary's table on the grounds that the public wants something called "health-care reform" and will punish anyone who seems to be obstructing it. This is understandable but out of date—the politics of the 1991 Pennsylvania primary, when health care was a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. The leaked outlines of the Clinton plan suggest something far less appealing—an underfunded, over-bureaucratic system, severing patients from doctors and offering a slush pile for the major insurance companies. Major elements in it will be unpopular. The cost, for instance. It will require an additional $350 billion in federal spending between 1994 and 2000 to cover subsidies for currently uninsured workers ($169 billion), long-term care ($80 billion), a prescription-drug program under Medicare ($72 billion), and administrative costs ($29 billion). Two-thirds of the program will allegedly be funded from savings in Medicare and Medicaid forecast under managed care. Yet since Medicare and Medicaid already pay hospitals and doctors *less* than it costs to provide care, forcing employers and workers to pick up the difference, these savings are very hypothetical indeed.

And rigorous price controls, such as those now proposed for the entire health-care system, have already failed to control Medicare spending. In 1990, Medicare's hospital fees were officially increased 4.7 per cent; in reality, total Hospital Insurance program outlays rose more than 14 per cent. Price controls fail because they do not address the real problem, stated above: people demand more medical services than they need because they are spending other people's money—employers', insurers', the government's. The Clinton plan does little to remedy this: employers will still pay for 80 per cent of each employee's health-insurance costs, and Medicaid and Medicare will continue to defray medical bills for the indigent and elderly.

Managed competition, under guidelines set by the National Health Board, is supposed to make it all work. Yet half the employers responding to a recent survey by A. Foster Higgins, an employee-benefits consulting firm, said their HMO rates were as high as, or *higher* than, their non-managed-care costs.

The combination of managed care, price controls, and fixed budgets will have some effects, just not the ones intended. Doctors will spend less time with patients, swell the number of hospital admissions and reimbursements, and overcharge their privately insured patients (as they do at present, charging 127 per cent of the true costs, on average). But the most dangerous effect will be on the quality of medical care. The global budget constraints envisioned in the plan will, in the words of Alain Enthoven, "freeze the inefficiencies of today's system into place." Last May, the *Washington Post* reported that investment in the biotechnology industry has already halted because companies fear they will not be allowed to recover the costs of medical breakthroughs.

Not surprisingly, the Treasury, which can be brought to heel, has supplanted the sometimes independent Congressional Budget Office as the source of future health-care estimates. As political debate reveals more of the flaws in the plan, even Hillary herself may come to be supplanted. Now is the time for the GOP not to play along, but to make the case for a better system.

The Federal Forklift?

VICE PRESIDENT Gore, a regular contributor to these pages, had a forklift full of *Federal Registers* in tow when he announced the recommendations of his National Performance Review. There are some good ideas scattered throughout his own fat proposal (some of them picked up from Ronald Reagan's Grace Commission). At the end of the day, however, the burden on the forklift won't much be much lighter. The Federal Govern-

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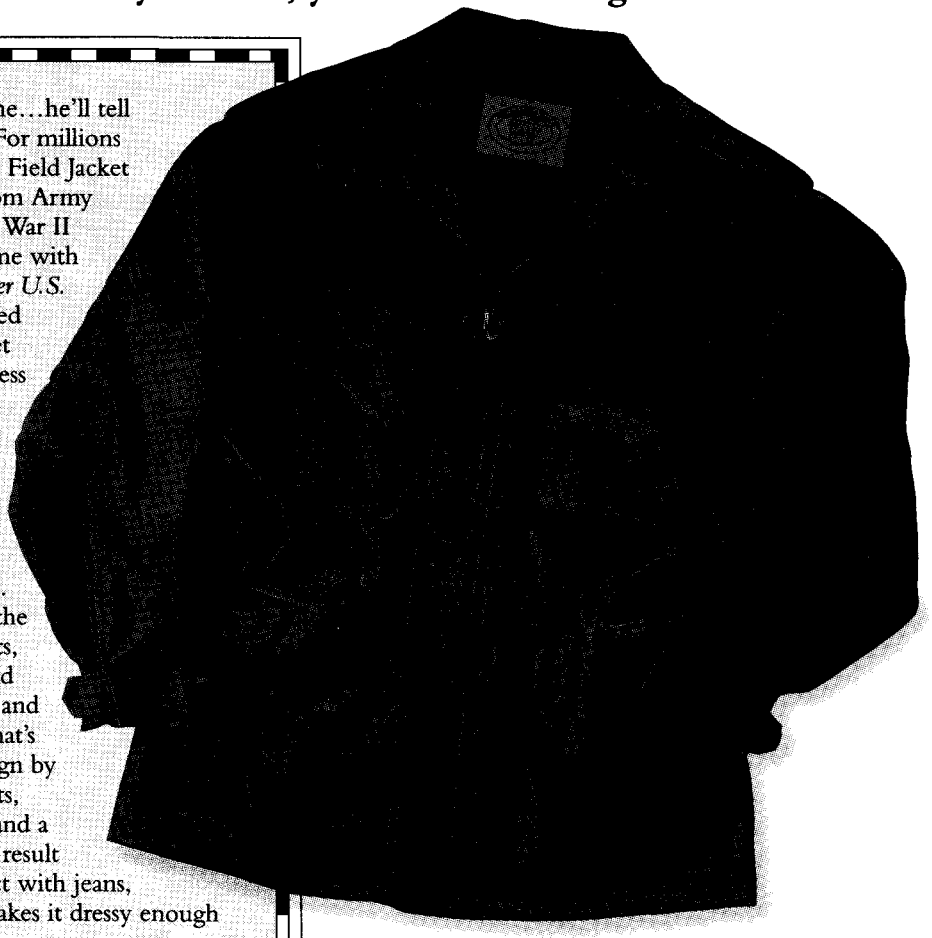

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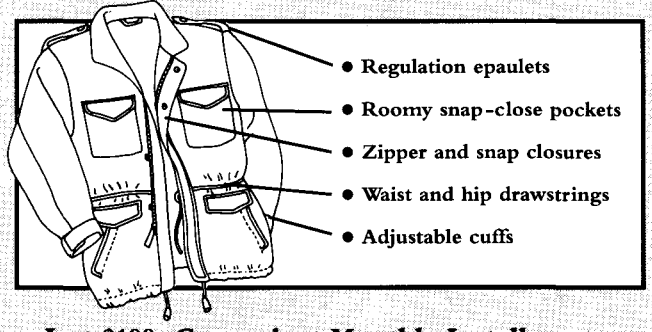

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ment got to be the way it is because of its entrenched institutional framework and the incentives and constraints on the civil servants who staff it. Mr. Gore's proposals won't change either.

He did say that the Federal Government of his dreams would be "more responsive to its customers." But the central problem of modern government is that its customers are not the general public, but Beltway activists and other special-interest groups. And from a civil servant's point of view, there is no such thing as separation of powers. Federal agencies must respond not just to directives from the President and his appointees. Congress weighs in with all sorts of legislative control, particularly over agency budgets. Its committees hold constant oversight hearings designed to instill obedience. The courts get into the act with rulings and orders. The public hardly gets a look in.

Mr. Gore's numbers don't add up either, and conservatives aren't the only ones to say so. According

· RIGHT DATA

Reinventing Congress

AL GORE'S plan to cut federal employment may have missed the area of government responsible for most of the problem: congressional staffs. Over the past twenty years the number of people employed by the House and Senate has almost doubled, while the total federal workforce has remained nearly constant.

BIG GOVERNMENT; BIGGER CONGRESS

	Number of Employees			% Increase
	1970	1980	1992	1970-92
Senate	4,105	6,995	7,820	90.5
House	7,022	11,406	12,236	74.6
Total Federal Government	2.10 mil.	2.18 mil.	2.20 mil.	4.8

In 1970 it cost $343 million to run Congress. By 1980 it cost $1.2 billion. Congress is now a $2.8-billion a year operation, manned by 20,000 House and Senate staffers plus an additional 18,000 employees assigned to CBO, GAO, the Library of Congress, and other legislative agencies. In 1992 the average congressman had a staff of 28 people. As recently as 1960 congressmen got by with staffs that averaged only 9.

Some lawmakers insist that they need large staffs in order to match the resources available to the executive branch. Yet most new staff are assigned to district offices where they perform "constituency service," a euphemism that covers everything from helping the lady who didn't get her Social Security check to helping local businessmen procure federal contracts. In 1972 an eighth of Senate staffers, and less than a quarter of their counterparts in the House, were based in the home state. By 1990 more than a third of Senate staffers and more than 40 per cent of House staffers were based in the home state. More than any other factor—including the disproportionate share of PAC money going to incumbents—constituency service has killed competition in congressional races.

The staff infection has caused other major problems. In the name of oversight, a growing number of Washington-based staff spend their days meddling in the affairs of executive agencies. Subcommittees routinely order Cabinet agencies to hire more workers in a particular location, even when the district manager says they are not needed. The Veterans Administration, with more than 200,000 employees, needs congressional approval to fire just three workers. Committee staffs write detailed rules for federal programs, and insert exceptions for particular individuals and businesses.

When the political pressure to cut costs becomes inexorable, Congress slows things up with paperwork. The Pentagon, for example, is bombarded with more than 100,000 official written congressional inquiries each year. In the late 1970s four subcommittees wrote defense legislation; today 24 committees and 40 subcommittees oversee defense.

While handcuffing opponents, Congress exempts itself from most oversight. Neither OMB or Al Gore can make any recommendation regarding the $2.8-billion legislative budget. Likewise, the Freedom of Information Act and key provisions of the Ethics in Government Act apply only to the executive branch of government.

Meanwhile, the Washington-based staff seems abysmally ignorant of vital policy issues. A recent survey of 100 congressional offices conducted by syndicated columnist Matthew Lesko found that 71 were unaware of existing federal health-care programs available to the uninsured, such as the Hill–Burton program which requires hospitals and nursing home to provide free care to those who have trouble paying their bills.

Congressional staff has become so big that it doesn't know what it is doing—or what it has already done.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

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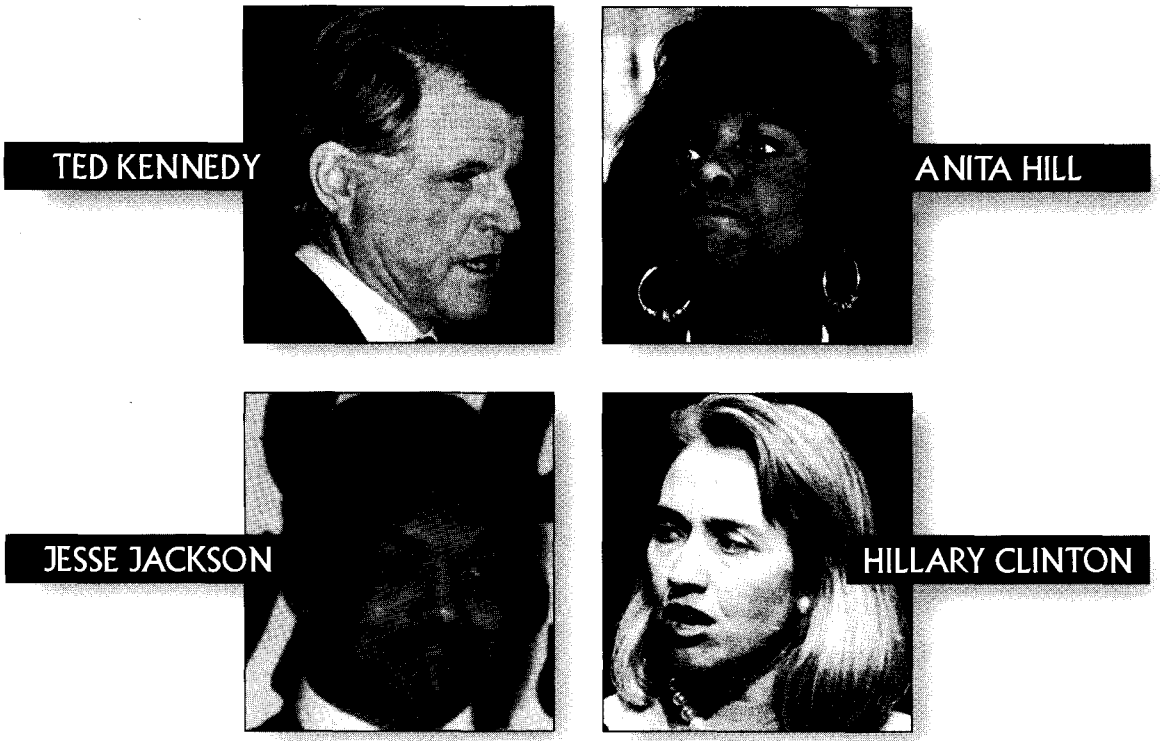

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to the *Washington Post*'s account of a conversation with Robert Greenstein of the liberal Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, there is a pattern of "incomplete computations." For example, the Gore review claims to be able to save $4 billion by "speeding up review of Social Security disability payments"—i.e., getting loafers off the books more quickly. But Mr. Greenstein calculates that it would cost $2 billion in additional staff to accomplish the purging of Social Security rolls, cutting the saving to $2 billion.

As with money, so with regulations. The Clinton Administration has doubled the monthly rate at which regulations are issued as compared to the Reagan–Bush years. How many environmental regulations is Mr. Gore willing to trim? Better hang on to that forklift—and put in a requisition order (in triplicate) for two more.

Middle East Breakthrough

IT WAS an extraordinary scene—Yasir Arafat, Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, and Bill Clinton schmoozing on the White House lawn, with George Bush, Jimmy Carter, Henry Kissinger, Jim Baker, and a cast of hundreds cheering them on. But are celebrations in order?

It would be foolish to ignore the risks of this agreement—the generic unreliability of the PLO; the violent hostility of the Palestinian irredentists, who will do all they can to sabotage it; the danger that autonomy will evolve into a PLO-run Palestinian state threatening Jordan as much as Israel; and more. Israel will need to be vigilant, and the U.S. will need to be strong as a backstop to its friends in the Middle East.

For even if this accord succeeds, it will only signal a redrawing of the battle lines in the region. If all goes well, the U.S., Israel, and Arab moderates will find themselves on the same side against the growing power of revolutionary Islam championed by Iran. Although the Palestinian issue is said to be the heart of the Middle East conflict, it is in truth only one of several political, economic, cultural, and ideological ingredients of instability. Many sources of tension remain, threatening the long-term survival of some friendly Arab regimes.

Yet if the Palestinian issue has now been defused, the enemies of the West will lose some of their emotional steam and moderates will at least have a breathing space. Let us hope so.

As negotiations unfold, the U.S. role will be indispensable. Some issues, particularly in the security provisions, remain unresolved. Israel and the PLO will have to work out clear lines of responsibility between Palestinian "police" functions and the Israeli army's residual responsibility for the area's security. Whatever arrangements they devise will be put to the test by terrorists eager to provoke Israeli reintervention in order to undermine the accord.

Still more important will be America's credibility as a great power, upon which all the forces of peace and moderation in the region ultimately depend. The current Administration plans to slash our defense programs $127 billion below even the drawdown planned by President Bush and Defense Secretary Cheney over five years. It is an Administration whose international posture is "hopeless" (the word a highly placed Israeli used in speaking to journalist Lally Weymouth)—one reason why Israel bypassed the U.S. in its talks with the PLO.

The risks of this agreement will be compounded if such impressions of American weakness persist. And so will many other risks in places not yet as turbulent as the Middle East.

It's Funding Time

While the AARP starts to smolder,
Soaking Medicare gets the cold shoulder,
    And a hospital tax
    Will be getting the axe
As the Mrs. gets visibly older.

W. H. VON DREELE

Green House Gases

WHILE Vice President Gore was re-inventing government, the White House's Office of Environmental Policy was floating a pair of presidential orders designed to produce more bureaucratic gridlock. It persuaded President Clinton to sign one of them. Dated August 3 and titled "Federal Compliance with Right-to-Know Laws and Pollution Prevention Requirements," the eight-page presidential order requires each federal agency to "establish a plan" for reducing the use of toxic chemicals by 50 per cent by 1999. Toxic chemicals are defined as 756 chemicals and compounds listed in various so-called Toxic Use Reduction (TUR) laws and include such terrifying things as aluminum, ammonia, benzene, chlorine, chromium, copper, phenol, silver, styrene, vinyl chloride, and various nickel and zinc compounds. In addition, the list covers virtually all the raw materials of the organic chemicals industry—benzene, ethylene, propylene, xylene, toluene, butadiene—and many of its intermediate and final products. Many of these are hazardous, but they are hazards we have learned to manage.

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A second presidential order still being fought over covers recycling and use of "environmentally preferable products" by the Federal Government. That order originally included a section calling for the government to acquire "totally chlorine-free paper" by 1995. In fact, there is nothing inherently hazardous about chlorine. Most of us take chlorine in our drinking water, since it is the most commonly used germicide at municipal waterworks. But chlorine is being demonized by the environmental movement as a source material for various bogy products such as chlorinated fluorocarbons (CFCs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and DDT. Greens reason that if they can stigmatize and eventually ban the source chemical, they will abort all the downstream products.

But the move to end the feds' purchase of chlorinated paper products was a political over-reach by the the White House Greens. Virtually all U.S.-made printing paper and tissue products are made from Southern pine pulp that is very sappy and requires heavy chlorination to wash out the yellow lignins. By contrast paper manufacturers in Sweden, Finland, and Germany use less sappy woods such as birches and firs, and can easily convert to non-chlorine technology. The draft presidential order on paper was virtually a "Buy European" order. After vigorous lobbying by the Chemical Manufacturers Association and the American Forest and Paper Association, the White House put out the word it would drop the no-chlorinated-paper clause.

Far from abandoning the principle that hazardous substances can simply be listed and phased out in favor of other items deemed "environmentally preferable," however, the White House appears to be sticking with plans to institute "affirmative procurement programs" favoring federal purchase of such items. It proposes an Environmental Executive at deputy assistant secretary level or higher in every federal agency who would be responsible for running a continuous Green check on all agency activities.

Is this government activism necessary? Or even sensible? John D. Graham and George Gray of the Center for Risk Analysis at the Harvard School of Public Health point out in a paper that the idea that certain chemicals are inherently "toxic" is unscientific. *All* chemicals are harmful in certain conditions and concentrations. But there is no scientifically defensible method of declaring substances as "toxic." The various lists proposed by toxic-reduction advocates have "no sound and consistent technical basis."

Indeed, in a letter to President Clinton, they say: "The use of lists ignores the central tenet of toxicology that the dose makes the poison. All substances from table salt to asbestos can be toxic under some conditions of exposure. By ignoring the role of exposure and encouraging substitution of chemicals which are not on the list for those on the list, the

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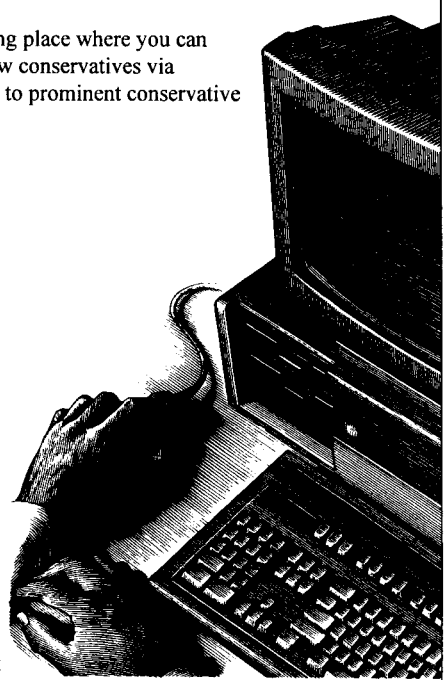

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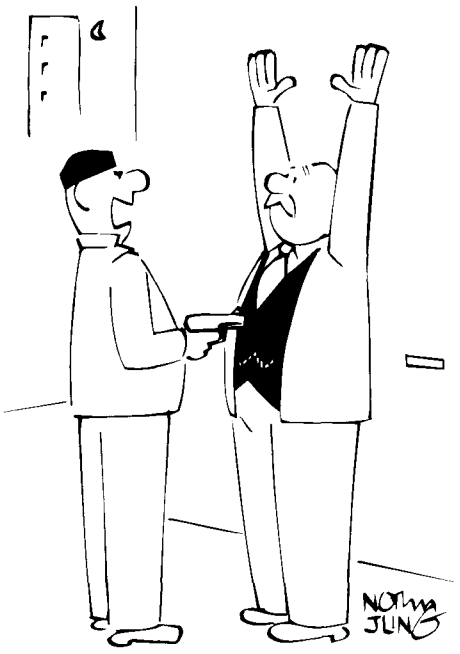

"Look at it as the trickle-down theory in action."

TUR strategy may lead to unintended and increased risks to health and the environment."

How so? Many of the unlisted substances have not been thoroughly studied. Once tested, they are likely to be listed too. So procurement policy will become a game of musical chairs, with procurement shifting from one untested substance to another.

Then again, if agencies are stopped from buying supplies by internal Green Police, the Federal Government may one day be left without paper and simply stop working. Well, think of a better idea.

Aaron Wildavsky, R I P

AARON WILDAVSKY'S untimely passing from lung cancer has deprived the conservative movement of one of its most eloquent spokesmen and distinguished scholars.

The child of Ukrainian immigrants, he grew up in Brooklyn and went to Brooklyn College. After serving in the U.S. Army, he received a PhD in political science from Yale in 1958. From 1962 until his death, he was a professor of political science at the University of California at Berkeley, where he served as department chairman during the stormy 1960s, and as founding dean of its Graduate School of Public Policy.

A former president of the American Political Science Association, Aaron Wildavsky was perhaps the most honored political scientist of his generation, winning prizes and awards galore. He was a prolific writer, the author or co-author of 36 books on subjects such as the budgetary process, policy analysis, foreign affairs, public administration, and presidential elections.

Mr. Wildavsky was often mentioned as one of the "neoconservatives" who "came over" in the 1960s. But his contributions to conservatism spanned the whole of a scholarly life devoted to documenting the limitations and failures of government. The Berkeley faculty has never been as liberal as its reputation, and Mr. Wildavsky was one of the reasons. A meeting room at the Public Policy School is decorated with a Latin translation of the school's informal motto: "There is no such thing as a free lunch."

Mr. Wildavsky was an extraordinary teacher, a provocative writer, and a flamboyant personality. Remarking on his book on Moses as a political leader, an Old Testament scholar once remarked: "There is more Wildavsky than Moses in the book; but then, of course, Wildavsky was more interesting than Moses." It was a pity that he did not have his own television show, since he was also far more entertaining than most television personalities.

In his last weeks, he continued his life's work—debating ideas with the stream of visitors from everywhere. On his deathbed, he wrote his last paper, a critique of Freud on the subject of humor.

He died at age 63, a great loss for those who knew him and for the cause of liberty.

—A. LAWRENCE CHICKERING

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

A recent issue of NATIONAL REVIEW reprinted your column concerning the protocols of title usage in this gender-free era. Specifically, the issue was using "chairperson," "chairman," or "chair" when referring to a woman in charge of a group. The best example that I know of that resolves this dilemma is used by the Crow tribe. The elected official in charge of the Crow Tribal Council traditionally is referred to as "Chairman." The incumbent, Clara White Hip Nomee, is addressed as "Madam Chairman." This both is sensitive to the concerns of many women and avoids referring to someone as an inanimate object.

Sincerely,
Gene E. Krueger
Falls Church, Va.

Dear Mr. Krueger: I hate to tell you, but it was that way quite generally until about 15 years ago. Cordially,
WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I have devised a way for high-school seniors to get around the problem of progressive university admissions officers who practice what is cynically known as "equal opportunity." I recommend that *all* appli-

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cants state, on forms where queried for gender and race, that they are, say, African-American females. Thus, admissions officers would be unable to distinguish between prospective freshmen merely on the basis of gender and race. And the liberals say they want to eliminate sexism and racism—what reason could they have to object?

Please tell me what you think of my plan.

Sincerely,
Michael Laszlo
Vienna, Austria

P.S.: In case you doubt my academic credentials, I have applied to Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Dartmouth—and been rejected by all.

Dear Mr. Laszlo: Why don't you file suit for discrimination? Cordially, WFB

■ Buckley,

Your silly article "The Lakewood Primitives" in which you claim that many middle class whites support abortion because of the "dysgenic black fertility" rates in American society. It's amazing and amusing that you—a degenerate white monkey of dysgenic Irish stock is so invincibly ignorant as to talk of "dysgenic" black birth rates. Surely you Europeans who came to "America" (what a fake name) to steal land, rape, plunder and defecate are the degenerate offal of European culture. If you weren't dysgenic and degenerate why did your ancestors leave the miserable shores of that stupid place called Ireland. You people were so stupid that you had to wait for potatoes from the so-called Indians to prepare for yourself a good meal. But it was no good—since most of you almost starved to death (because of your stupidities) in a land where there was *no war* or *drought*. You big-nosed proboscis monkey with your silly logorrhea and clownish attitudes are a good example of the degenerate European types who were too idiotic to stay in Europe and a make a life for themselves. You and your ilk represent nothing but homosexuality (a European disease), rape, theft of land, murder, just pale feces. You and your ilk go around polluting things, plundering, raping, etc. etc.

Buckley you are nothing but a big-nosed nothing—the clown prince of television.

Sincerely,
A. Kamra
Boca Raton, Fla.

Dear Mr. Kamra: Do I take it you disagree with me? Why don't you give the matter a little more thought? Cordially, **—WFB**

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ON THE SCENE

Weeding Government's Garden

BRIT HUME

Jeff Fisher

WASHINGTON, D.C.

STANDING on a platform on the White House South Lawn September 7, President Clinton ceremoniously accepted from Vice President Gore the 168-page Report of the National Performance Review. Mr. Gore had been working on it for six months. Behind the two men were stacks of government rules and regulations. They were piled on fork lifts that had been wheeled onto the lawn for the occasion. "If you want to know why government doesn't work," Mr. Gore told the President, "look behind you." The President, saying this is "one report that will not gather dust in a warehouse," told the audience the report was "actually fun to read." It was all impossibly hokey, but Mr. Clinton was right about one thing. Mr. Gore and his team had produced a report that is, if not fun to read, at least lucid and interesting. It is also hard to disagree with and, considering its subject matter, the more remarkable for having come from a Democratic Administration.

"We spend $25 billion a year on welfare, $27 billion on food stamps, and $13 billion on public housing—yet more Americans fall into poverty every year," the report says. "It is almost as if federal programs were *designed* not to work. In truth, few are 'designed' at all; the legislative process simply churns them out, one after another, year after year. . . . We have spent too much money for programs that don't work. It's time to make our government work for the people, learn to do more with less and treat taxpayers like customers." That sounds like the kind of appraisal one is accustomed to hearing from conservatives.

And there's more. The report traces much of the government's inefficiency to the stultifying oversight and control by which it is administered. "In Washington's highly politicized world," it says, "the greatest risk is not that a program will perform poorly, but that scandal will erupt. Scandals are front-page news, while routine failure is ignored. Hence control system after control system is piled up to minimize the risk of scandal . . . Indeed the Federal Government spends billions paying people who control, check up on, or investigate others—supervisors, headquarters staffs, budget officers, personnel officers, procurement officers, and staffs of the General Accounting Office (GAO) and the inspectors general."

And, the report notes, "What the staff agencies don't control, Congress does." The Interior Department, for example, found that Congress had included in various conference-committee reports last year more than two thousand specific directives, instructions, and earmarks. The Forest Service, for example, was barred from closing any field offices. Another agency was forbidden even to study the idea of contracting out guard duties. Small wonder, then, that there are nine pages of specifications for a government-purchased ashtray ("a minimum of four cigarette rests, spaced equidistant around the periphery"). Mr. Gore had fun smashing a specimen on the David Letterman show. "Cool," said Letterman.

The report proposes to do away with many of the government overseers and many of the rules—especially those governing procurement and personnel. There are 100,000 pages of personnel rules—resulting, the report notes, from the desire to keep the government from being staffed by the friends and relatives of politicians. Drastically slashing the rules and their enforcers is how Mr. Gore proposes to cut the federal payroll by 252,000 jobs over five years. This is the principal source of the $108 billion the report's proposals would allegedly save over the same period.

Republicans found themselves with little choice but to endorse the Gore report. "I am prepared to sit down with the President and work with him," said Senator Thad Cochran. Phil Gramm said he was "a bit skeptical about Democrats who now suddenly want to reduce the number of people working for the government." But he also said, "We ought to give the President a chance to deliver."

More surprising was the reaction of the government-employee unions. They, too, endorsed the proposals, including the staff cuts. There was a good reason. Nobody is expected to be fired. The cuts will be achieved through attrition, early retirement, and buyouts. Far from criticizing federal bureaucrats, the report relied on them for advice. Thus its conclusion that "The problem is not lazy or incompetent people; it is red tape and regulation . . . The Federal Government is filled with good people trapped in a bad system." The slogan of this plan—"Creating a government that works better and costs less"—may imply a smaller government, but that's not what it means. The report itself acknowledges it was "focused primarily on *how* government should work, not on *what* it should do. Our job was to improve performance in areas where policymakers had already

Mr. Hume is chief White House correspondent for ABC News.

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decided government should play a role." As for food stamps and the other entitlement programs the report cited as not working, well, the report recommends using a coded credit card to replace the stamps themselves. Only three government programs are recommended for elimination: the federal wool, mohair, and honeybee subsidies. Their abolition had already been recommended in the Clinton budget. Congress refused.

Far from being a failing, however, the plan's advocates see its tough-love approach to government as an asset. John Sharp, the Texas state comptroller whose own "reinventing government" program was used as a model for the Gore report, explained as follows: "This is the first time in my lifetime that there has been a study like this done in Washington, D.C., by people who don't hate government. . . . If you do a study with people who absolutely hate government, they're going to slash and burn instead of weeding and cultivating, as we call it. Then you're going to come up with a report that doesn't work and probably shouldn't pass." So much for Ronald Reagan's Grace Commission, whose recommendations are gathering dust in a warehouse.

Mr. Sharp and the plan's other enthusiasts say it will take up to ten years to carry out, assuming Congress can be persuaded to go along. It would be a miracle if Congress went along with all of it, but it's worth remembering that many members are under intense political pressure to cut government spending. This plan doesn't cut much, but supporting it is a way to relieve the pressure. It's also an ideal issue for Bill Clinton to use as a shield against the charge that he's just another tax-and-spend Democrat. This program doesn't do much about either taxing or spending, but it sure sounds like it does. □

Economic Consequences of the Peace

JOEL BAINERMAN

JERUSALEM

WHENEVER economics is discussed in the context of an Israeli–Palestinian peace treaty, a number of very hopeful scenarios are put forth: a common regional market comprising Israel, Jordan, and the West Bank and Gaza; Israelis and Palestinians establishing joint ventures and selling their products to the Arab world; Arabs investing billions in the Palestinian economy. These scenarios typically end with the reminder that "only peace can bring about regional economic development and prosperity."

The truth is more nearly the reverse: if the Palestinians' economic problems are not solved, a permanent peace cannot be assured. And despite the hope that comes from the "Gaza–Jericho First" accord between Israel and the PLO, the economies of the West Bank and Gaza have not seen worse days.

After a decade of phenomenal growth rates in the 1970s, these economies stagnated in the 1980s, as contributions to the PLO by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Iraq were cut in half because of low oil prices. After the Gulf War all funding from these sources ceased, as well as the $150 million of remittances from Palestinians working in the Gulf. To add to their hardship, many Palestinians have lost their employment in Israel to Russian immigrants.

Against this backdrop, plans are being drawn up to rehabilitate the economies of the West Bank and Gaza.

According to Samir Huliah, a member of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, the economic research department of the PLO in Tunis estimates that the Palestinian economy will require $11.6 billion during the next seven years. The World Bank's 650-page plan recommends the investment of $4.3 billion in public-sector projects over a ten-year period. Still another plan has been written by George Abed, executive director of the Geneva-based Palestine Welfare Association. He takes a long-term view and estimates that for a Palestinian state to be viable, $25 billion will be needed over a ten-year period. Of this amount, $15 billion would be spent on infrastructure, and the balance on investment in the private sector.

The major question underlying all of these multi-billion-dollar plans is whether the donor nations (the EC, the Gulf Arab states, the U.S., and Japan) will come up with the funds. Gil Feiler, director of a Tel Aviv–based market-research company, says such expectations are totally unrealistic. "They can talk about receiving hundreds of millions, but they are dreaming if they think they will be able to raise billions, from the Arab countries or the West," says Feiler. "In the last three years there has been lots of talk, but few donations."

The Palestinians are pinning much of their hope on the Americans. The U.S. Government is behind the creation of a Middle East reconstruction bank, modeled after the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, to finance joint-development projects in the region.

The Palestinians are also counting heavily on wealthy Palestinians living abroad. Abed's plan assumes that $9 billion would be raised over a ten-year period from this source.

This too may be unrealistic. Diaspora Jews contribute about $1.5 billion a year to Israel in donations and development funds and tens of millions in private investment. There are six times as many Jews as Palestinians in the Diaspora and they are considerably more wealthy.

Managing high levels of foreign aid will be a major challenge for any future Palestinian leadership. Hitherto, they have not had a very positive experience with foreign assistance. A reporter for an East Jerusalem daily newspaper recently wrote: "Every week there are reports about the distribution of aid by one East Jerusalem consulate or another to a number of institutions in the West Bank and Gaza. Most of them are controlled by people with family connections in Palestinian society or political party connections. Aid goes to the same esteemed families. . . . If the European donor nations really want to develop Palestinian society, to create jobs, and to raise standards of living, they are obliged to directly and continually supervise their aid." However, there are indications that donors are getting more experienced and are already ensuring that their donations are allocated where they are needed.

Mr. Bainerman is the editor of Inside Israel, *a monthly report on Israeli affairs.*

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In the first stage of the "Gaza–Jericho First" autonomy agreement, the focus of economic development will be the Gaza Strip. The area is home to nearly 800,000 people, half of whom live in eight refugee camps. More than 60 per cent of the population is under the age of 19, and 76 per cent is under 29. Per-capita income in 1992 was just over $1,300.

It is estimated that to build 120,000 apartments for refugees currently living in camps and to construct ninety miles of new roads, an electricity and water system, hospitals, and an industrial infrastructure will cost $500 million a year for the next five years. This is nearly the entire GDP of the area, which stands at just under $560 million.

Stanley Maron, who has conducted extensive research on the Palestinian economy, raises the question: "What happens when an economy as undeveloped as Gaza is suddenly swamped with hundreds of millions of dollars in external assistance? If the money doesn't come in on a scale relative to the economy, it will be like a rainstorm in the desert. A lot of run-off and little absorption."

Up until 1967 the West Bank was a neglected region of the Hashemite Kingdom, which encouraged investment in the East rather than the West Bank. Since 1967, under Israeli rule, it has experienced tremendous economic growth, particularly in the 1970s, when the Palestinian economy grew at an average rate of 5 per cent per annum. However, all of this was at a cost: its almost complete subservience to the Israeli economy. While a separation might cause slight economic damage to Israel, it could devastate Palestine. The GNP of the West Bank and Gaza is $2 billion; of Israel, $52 billion. The average monthly wage in the territories is $540; in Israel it is $1,800.

Currently, there are no borders between the West Bank and Gaza and Israel, and the three economies constitute one unified market. If the West Bank and Gaza do become autonomous, the Palestinians will want some type of border control to collect customs and taxes, and to protect their industries from competition from Israel. Meanwhile, Israel will, as Agriculture Minister Yaacov Zur has already stated, want to protect its fruit and vegetable market from being swamped by cheaper imports from the territories. Border controls, however, may make it impossible for Palestinians to enter Israel to work every day. Until the closure of the territories in March, more than 40 per cent of the Palestinian national income was generated by the 100,000 laborers entering Israel to work.

Investment in such a small market as the West Bank and Gaza, with a population of only 1.6 million, will also be a major problem. The total contribution of industry, large and small, to the combined West Bank and Gaza GDP is just 7 per cent.

Nor is there much hope for industrial joint ventures, given the stark differences in the technological and industrial levels between the Israeli and Palestinian economies. The Palestinians would quickly find themselves under Israeli economic, rather than political, domination.

But the much-touted West Bank confederation with Jordan does not look like much of a solution. This would merely lump two undeveloped economies together. While a larger domestic consumer market would be created, stiff competition would develop, since the people on the two sides of the Jordan River grow almost identical crops and make similar types of industrial products. There are no financial sources in Jordan to aid the West Bank industrial infrastructure, since the Kingdom of Jordan is nearly $7 billion in debt.

There are also internal political obstacles to economic prosperity. If the autonomous Palestinian region could enjoy five to ten years' political stability there is no reason why it couldn't secure reasonable levels of industrial development. Yet considering the powerful opposition to Yasir Arafat's rule from factions within the PLO and the Islamic fundamentalists, political stability is far from assured.

The instability can only be exacerbated by the need of the Palestinians to absorb their brethren in a new state. In addition to rehabilitating the 480,000 refugees currently in the West Bank and Gaza, the new state would have to feed and house—and find jobs for—any refugees returning from Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. The Palestinians will also have to alter the mindset of those refugees, who have been living in camps for more than

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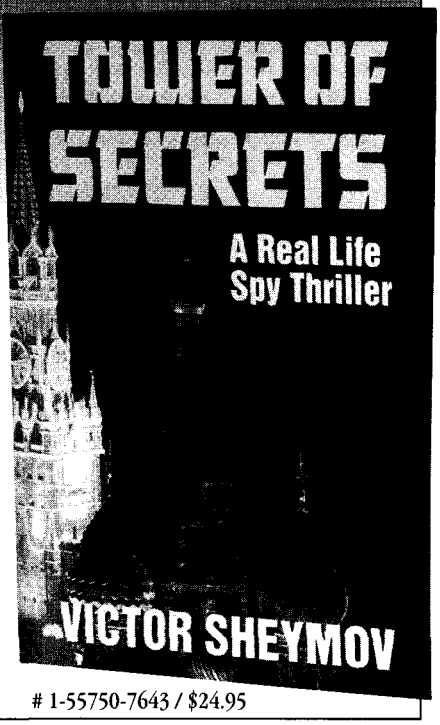

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four decades and who consequently feel a consuming hatred for Israel.

The Palestinians face a choice between two evils: the cost of a complete separation or economic domination by Israel. To be politically independent would mean cutting themselves off from a major market for their labor and goods, and in the process watching their standard of living plummet even further.

In fact, it could be argued that history has already annexed them economically to Israel. Once the celebrations over the treaty end, this is the economic fact of life that they and all those concerned with peace in the Mideast will to have to confront. □

New Democrats, Getting Old

RICH LOWRY

ARLINGTON

VIRGINIA gubernatorial candidate Mary Sue Terry says she finds herself "agreeing more and more" with Ronald Reagan. She has run a TV ad implying her opponent opposes the death penalty. She has repudiated the Clinton budget.

In some places, Miss Terry would be a Republican. Not in Virginia, a state dominated since about 1980 by the centrist, New Democrat–style politics of former Governor, now Senator, Charles Robb. Here Democrats talk like Republicans, and get elected.

Or at least they used to. When Miss Terry easily won a second term as attorney general in 1989, pundits handed her a promissory note for the governor's mansion, redeemable this year. With a campaign chest of roughly $3 million, nearly universal name recognition, and a chance to be the first woman in the statehouse, almost everything says she's the next governor—except a vanishing lead in the polls.

After 12 years in which the Democrats haven't lost a race for statewide office, the "New Democrat" act here is wearing thin. Its originator, Mr. Robb, has been rocked by personal scandal, and one of its chief boosters, current Governor Doug Wilder, has been hurt by a disastrous run for his party's presidential nomination in 1991 and by his feud with Robb. These two not-so-rising stars—with approval ratings that look like a football score, Robb 41, Wilder 31—plan to pummel each other next year in a fight over Robb's Senate seat.

Meanwhile, the popularity of the White House's "new kind of Democrat" has hit Watergate levels, thanks mostly to his budget. The Clintons

D. F. Bach

have won a prized place in Virginia Republican rhetoric: "What you see with Hillary is what you get with Mary Sue," is how the biggest applause line for Mike Farris, Republican candidate for lieutenant governor, begins.

So, Miss Terry outspent her opponent by as much as 8 to 1 in August, with TV commercials running constantly, and *lost* ground—from an 18-point lead in June to a dead heat now. She has "three enormous millstones around her neck," says University of Virginia political scientist Larry Sabato, "named Bill Clinton, Chuck Robb, and Doug Wilder."

But her colleagues can't take all the credit. Her Republican opponent, George Allen, son of the late Washington Redskins coach, made 14 personal appearances in one recent week when Miss Terry made none. As Mr. Allen has cruised the state in a Winnebago driven by a Southwest Virginia supporter, he has picked up speed.

One reason: He is likable. The former state legislator and congressman (he lost his seat in redistricting) has the easygoing demeanor of a college freshman at his first fraternity function. He is less polished than his well-rehearsed opponent, but his style fits a theme of his populist campaign—he's the real thing.

Allen must convince voters that he will achieve what New Democrats only promise. It helps that his campaign has spit out detailed 15-page programs—on topics such as education, crime, welfare reform, and economic growth—keeping Miss Terry in the "me-too" mode. A Terry spokesman on Allen's workfare proposal: "We support welfare reform also."

And Mr. Allen has scored points on the campaign's most salient issue, crime. Miss Terry has endorsed a waiting period for handgun purchase and trumpets a tough-on-crime program. But Mr. Allen has a tougher package—he wants to abolish parole—and asks why Miss Terry, the state's top law-enforcement official for seven years, waited until *now* to propose her plan. The Fraternal Order of Police, for one, isn't biting; it has endorsed George Allen after giving Mary Sue Terry the nod in *both* her runs for attorney general.

Taxes are tougher: despite huge revenue shortfalls, Governor Wilder has avoided raising them. That leaves Mr. Allen trying to win back the fiscal-conservative issue on spending, which has ballooned 140 per cent in 12 years. Yet another $500-million shortfall is projected next year, meaning big budget cuts or a tax hike. In a state where every Democratic congressman save one voted for the Clinton budget, Mr. Allen hopes voters can guess which will be Miss Terry's preference.

Where Virginia Democrats stake out territory markedly different from the Republicans' is on social issues, a strategy well suited to the shifting demographics of this once rural, now increasingly suburban (and, hence, less traditional) state. Statewide elections often hinge on Northern Virginia. In 1989 the Democrats won this area's sprawling suburbs with abortion (Wilder was pro-choice, his opponent alternately pro-life and incoherent). This time they hope to win it with Mike Farris.

"Democrats love nothing more than to run a campaign in which they can charge the Republicans with catering to an extremist political element,"

Mr. Lowry is NR*'s associate editor.*

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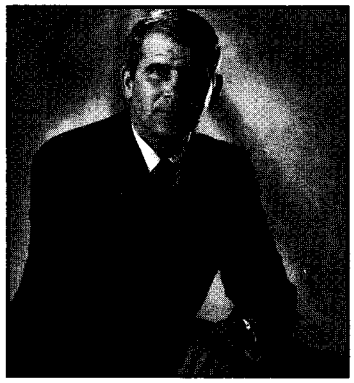

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says Mark Rozell, a political scientist at Mary Washington College. Mr. Farris, a home-schooling advocate and former Moral Majority activist, is their target. Considered articulate and bright even by critics, he is being hammered (often unfairly) for old writings and statements, many of which he has disavowed. (He called the schools a "godless monstrosity" in one of the Democrats' favorite sound bites.)

The Allen campaign fears that a well-financed Miss Terry will launch a punishing endgame media barrage against Mr. Farris. The trouble isn't his positions or supporters. He has a fine stump speech—standard Reagan—and has mobilized thousands of activists. But social-conservative politics need a soft touch, something Mr. Farris lacked five years ago. Asked what he'd do differently, he says, "[get] a better editor to edit my books."

That exaggerations or even lies about Mike Farris are the Democrats' chief weapon—"The other side does not fundamentally believe in public education," says their candidate for attorney general—may indicate how spent they are politically. (One recent poll, incidentally, had Mr. Farris trailing by just five points.) In recent years, Virginia has discovered two winning electoral strategies—the first in the 1970s when conservative Republicans captured life-long Democrats (the Reagan strategy), the second in the 1980s when Robb Democrats ideologically disarmed Republicans (the Clinton strategy)—and now perhaps the second is unraveling.

After 12 years of Democratic dominance and with a Democrat in the White House, Virginians may decide the best way to get Republican ideas effected is to vote Republican. That could put "New Democrats" out of business. □

Ultimate Reality in Chicago

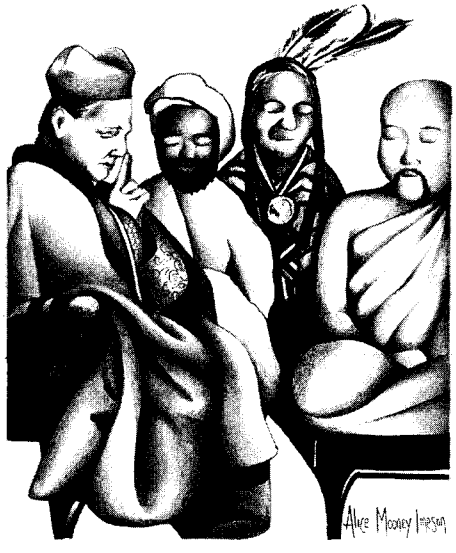
JOHN R. COYNE JR.

CHICAGO

DURING the last week of August and the first week of September, the rains paused and summer spent eight days in Chicago, along with some seven thousand participants in the 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions.

A century ago, the 1893 Parliament, part of the Columbian Exposition held in Chicago, was considered significant primarily because it introduced the American people to Asian religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism, when they were still exotic.

In 1993, however, non-Western religions dominated the conference—Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Jains, Bahais, Zoroastrians, neo-Pagans, Indians of both the Calcutta and Rosebud variety, witches, warlocks, goddesses, and at least one old Beat poet—garbed in a great variety of robes, dresses, gowns, cylindrical Egyptian headdresses, turbans, cowls, hoods, Chicago Cub baseball caps, at least one tam o'shanter, and in the case of Andras Arthen, a member of the Covenant of the Goddess, a wolf's-head headdress, which he would wear to great effect on September 1, capering in the light of the full moon with his



Alice Mooney Imeson

fellow wicans and wicanettes in the wold, a/k/a Grant Park.

In 1893, it would have been an exotic extravaganza of the first order. But nowadays, the typical conference participant and costume can be seen on any large state university campus—or for that matter, with the possible exception of the wolf's head, driving a big-city cab.

And indeed, given the great flood of people in town for a Cubs game, the Bears home opener, one of the city's endless stream of Latin American parades, and the Taste of Polonia, to name just a few, it was difficult to tell—especially in the vicinity of Palmer House, where the delegates were staying—just who was a professor or student at Ferris State University and who was a parliamentarian.

Inside Palmer House, however, most of the people milling about were indeed delegates—chanting, praying, preaching, meditating, or fleeing. ("Excuse me, Swami," shrilled one matron in pursuit of a pallid young man with large frightened eyes and a Rita Hayworth haircut, "what is your affiliation?")

Amid the great swirl of colors and languages, and a pervasive and somewhat gamy aroma, the Parliament had convened for two general though never clearly stated purposes. One was to have leaders from the faiths attending sign a common Declaration of a Global Ethic. The other was to demonstrate that members of diverse faiths can exist together harmoniously—at least for a week.

From the opening gong, however, there was trouble. In the beginning, the Word may have been God. But not at the Parliament of the World's Religions, where the word God (or even YWHW) was not allowed in the text of the definitive Declaration of a Global Ethic.

Its author, Father Hans Küng, the gloomy Swiss Roman Catholic theologian who many believe has never been too fond of the word in the first place, explained that including it would have "excluded all Buddhists and many faith groups with different views of God and the divine." The closest he came was in one reference to "Ultimate Reality."

Given the startling fact that the document under discussion is only *nine pages* long—when its tenets had been kicked around for the hundred years since the Parliament last convened, and Father Küng and his assistants had been working on it for more than two years (how many hours a word?)—Father Küng's apparent gloom became understandable.

"We have here a minimum ethic," he told reporters, referring to the document's selective condemnation of envi-

Mr. Coyne works for a major corporation in Chicago.

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ronmental crimes, anti-woman violence, hate crimes in general, but no mention of such matters as euthanasia or abortion. "To try to include them would kill the declaration," said Father Küng. Indeed.

"I have never worked so many months for so few words," he added. And as he points out, the results are minimal—a minimal but trendy statement of ethics, which did little to produce the harmony the Parliament professed to seek.

What it did accomplish, as became clear at the opening ceremonies, was to drive off most representatives from the established Western churches. True, in attendance was Chicago's Cardinal Bernardin, who some say will follow liberal causes even to the fringe of the lunatic Left; there was also a somewhat bewildered archbishop from the Vatican, where rumor has it they used to burn wicans and wicanettes. Also present were clusters of earnest Catholic lay people, of that sincere and distinctive breed who would have once been Dorothy Day Catholic Worker disciples.

But there were no identifiable representatives from any of the major fundamentalist or evangelical denominations—and, surprisingly, very few Methodists, Episcopalians, or even Presbyterians (John Calvin, rest in peace), who usually turn out in droves for goo-goo ecumenical meetings with religious exotics.

In some cases, groups that had accepted invitations canceled out. The Greek Orthodox Diocese of Chicago sent a letter stating: "It would be inconceivable for Orthodox Christianity to establish a perceived relationship with groups which profess no belief in God or a supreme being."

Also canceling out were four major Jewish groups, who objected to the inclusion of Minister Louis Farrakhan of the Nation of Islam as a speaker. Farrakhan retaliated by attacking Jewish leaders for using their influence with civil-rights leaders to exclude him from the Martin Luther King commemorative march on Washington. And at the meeting itself, things became less than harmonious when Indians and Sikhs engaged in a non-violent scuffle on the floor over charges of Indian repression.

In general, however, while it was a bad eight days for established religion, it was a triumph for what one California religious think-tanker called "religious pluralism." The tone was set in the opening ceremony, which began with a Native American ritual blessing, considerably longer than Father Küng's two-year essay. After invoking blessings from the four directions, for instance, and getting them slightly wrong, Elder Banyacya of the Hopi tribe told the group that "It's about time that all directions think of the earth as a mother," then segued into an observation about weather, always popular in Chicago, and ended by introducing the father into his equation. The recent flooding, he said, was "the father from above sending us terrible rain, telling us we are not doing something right." (To say nothing of what the father seems to be doing to the mother.)

After what seemed like several hours of this, and Uncle Dudley–like talks from Cardinal Bernardin and others, the high point of the meeting came with the blessings administered by Lady Olivia Robertson of the neo-Pagan (no paleos were in attendance) Fellowship of Isis. Much to the delight of the Rev. Baroness Cara-Marguerite Drusilla of the Pagan (also neo-) Lyceum of Benus of Healing, who nodded her Egyptian headdress and waved her hands, Lady Olivia shook a rattle and chanted in a loud voice: "Holy Goddess Isis, Mother of all beings, come to thy children."

This was the chant that also echoed through Grant Park on September 1, for the ceremony honoring the earth and celebrating the full moon—which, although not exactly a ghostly galleon, did rather eerily illuminate the bosky corners of Grant Park where the homeless take refuge, flushing several of them out of the bushes and out of the park itself, apparently either touched by the Ultimate Reality or undone by the chanting and by the sight of Andras Arthen, dancing on Mother Earth by the light of the Moon Goddess, wearing his wolf's-head headdress.

And that was pretty much it. At a news conference on the penultimate day of the Parliament, summing it all up in what may have been a divinely inspired non-sequitur, the Dalai Lama asked this rhetorical question: "If we have conflicts in the name of religion, can we help resolve other problems?"

His answer: "Nonsense." □

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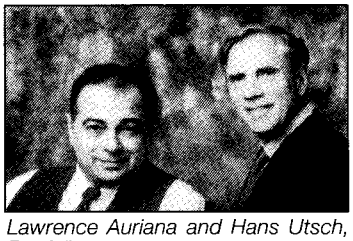

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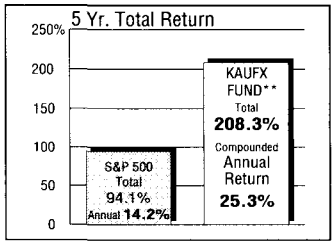

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WILLIAM TUCKER

"It is remarkable that, little as men are able to exist in isolation, they should nevertheless feel as a heavy burden the sacrifices that civilization expects of them in order to make a communal life possible."

—*Sigmund Freud,* The Future of an Illusion

AMERICA IS in a period of cultural crisis. For as long as we have been a civilization, monogamy, heterosexuality, legitimacy, and the virtues of marital fidelity have been givens of nature. The major religions have sanctioned them, as do four thousand years of Western history. Out-of-wedlock births, homosexuality, and other forms of sexual "deviance" have always existed, but have never laid claim to the mainstream.

All this is now coming under challenge. Part of it may simply be cultural exhaustion—the foolish confidence that the major battles of civilization have been fought and won and that it is now time for a little self-indulgence. Or it may be that the taste for the exotic and forbidden, usually confined to a small minority, has at last become available to the average person.

All this must be tolerated. In a free country, you can't stop people from doing what they want, especially when they have the money and leisure to do it. The situation is complicated, however, by the existence of a vast American "underclass" that does not generally share in the affluence, but is daily exposed to the sirens of self-indulgence. While the abandonment of cultural norms may have an exotic quality for the affluent, it is a palpable threat to the upward aspirations of the poor.

On the matter of single motherhood and illegitimacy, members of the underclass—particularly those of African-American origin—have proved peculiarly susceptible. Single motherhood has virtually become the norm in African-American society. (Over 65 per cent of black children are now born out of wedlock.) The failure to adhere to monogamy and two-parent child-rearing now forms the single greatest obstacle to the advancement of America's underclass.

Yet to speak in favor of monogamy, sexual modesty, fidelity, restraint, and two-parent families in the current cultural climate is to find oneself subject to the charge of being a bigot, a religious nut, or just hopelessly out of touch. The common assumption, particularly among the intelligentsia, is that all the traditional arguments for monogamy and two-parent families are religious and that everything that could be said in their favor was spoken centuries ago.

Monogamy Misunderstood

I CANNOT AGREE. For as much as monogamy has been sanctioned by Western culture, I do not believe that its function as the center of our civilization has ever been completely understood. There is in everyone a vague awareness that monogamy produces a peaceful social contract that is the framework for cultural harmony and economic advancement. Yet this subconscious recognition has rarely been explored at any great length. There is never any real articulation that monogamy is an ancient compromise whose breakdown only lets loose antagonisms that society has long suppressed. Monogamy, after all, is only one possible outcome of the age-old sexual dance. There are others, whose characteristics may not be quite so appealing.

Yet like all hard-won compromises, monogamy does not produce a perfect outcome for every individual.

Mr. Tucker has written an unpublished book about the family.

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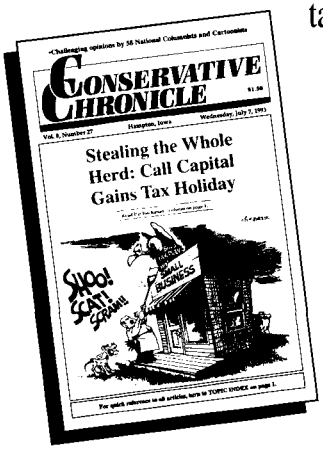

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When examined closely, it proves to be the source of many private dissatisfactions, which form a nagging undercurrent of discontent in any monogamous culture. Ordinarily, these disaffections remain a form of "deviance," generally suppressed and disapproved by the vast majority, although virtually impossible to eradicate. Only when the core ideals of the culture come under attack—when people begin to celebrate these discontents and embrace them within themselves—only then does the underlying architecture of the social contract come into stark relief.

The question that we face today is how much free rein we can give the discontents of monogamy before we risk overturning the central character of our culture. Society, of course, is not without its defenses. The long-standing, almost universal dislike and disapproval of child-bearing out of wedlock, of sexual infidelity, of easy divorce, of public prostitution and pornography, and of widespread, blatant homosexuality—these are not just irrational intolerances. They are the ancient, forgotten logic that holds together a monogamous society. As long as these attitudes remain unexamined, however, they can play little part in the current debate and will be easily dismissed as mere prejudices.

What we need, then, is a defense of monogamy based on a rational understanding of its underlying principles. Here is an attempted beginning.

The Arithmetic of Reproduction

LET US START with some basic arithmetic. In any reproducing population, the laws of chance dictate that there will be about the same number of males and females. There are thus three ways in which the population can arrange itself for mating purposes: 1) polyandry, in which one female collects several males as mates; 2) polygyny (often called, less precisely, polygamy), in which one male collects several females; and 3) monogamy, in which each female and each male mate with only one other individual.

Of the three possibilities, the first—polyandry—is the rarest in nature. An understanding of the basics of reproduction tells us why.

In nearly all species, the female role in reproduction is the "limiting factor." This has to do with the differences between eggs and sperm. Sperm are small and motile, while eggs are large and relatively immobile. The egg generally comes wrapped in a package of nutrients that will feed the fertilized ovum until "birth." Because eggs are more complex—and therefore harder to manufacture—a female generates far fewer eggs than a male generates sperm. (Among mammals, a single male ejaculation often contains more sperm cells than a female will produce eggs in her lifetime.) Since there are always more sperm than eggs—and since it takes one of each to produce an offspring—eggs are the limiting factor to reproduction.

As a result, females have generally gone on to play a larger role in nurturing offspring as well. The principle that determines this responsibility has been identified by biologists as the "last chance to abandon." Here is how it works.

When fertilization of the egg takes place, one partner is usually left with the egg in his or her possession—often attached to or within his or her body. Most often, this is the female. This leaves the male free to go and seek other mating opportunities. The female, on the other hand, has two basic options: 1) she can abandon the egg and try to mate again (but this will only leave her in the same dilemma); or 2) she can stay with the egg and try to nurture it to maturity. The latter is a better reproductive strategy. As a result, females become "mothers," caring for the fertilized eggs, and often the newborn offspring as well.

The few exceptions prove the rule. Among seahorses, the fertilized egg is nurtured in a kangaroo-like pouch on the *male's* stomach. This makes the male the limiting factor to reproduction. As a result, the sex roles are reversed. Male seahorses become "mothers," nurturing their offspring to maturity, while females abandon their "impregnated" sexual partners and look for new mating opportunities.

The logic of reproduction has produced another universal characteristic in nature, called "female coyness." Males can spread their sperm far and wide, impregnating as many females as possible, while females may get only one mating opportunity per season. Therefore, females must choose wisely. In almost every species, males are the sexual aggressors, while females hold back, trying to select the best mate. Often the male is made to perform some display of strength or beauty, or go through some ritual expression of responsibility (nest-building) before the female agrees to mate with him. With seahorses, once again, the roles are reversed. Males are coy and reluctant, while females are the sexual aggressors.

It is for these reasons that polyandry—one female forming a mating bond with several males—is uncommon and unfavorable. Even though a single female might consort with several males, she can only be impregnated by one or two of them. Thus, most males would be unsuccessful. Moreover, the attachment of several males to one female would mean that other females would be left with no mates. The outcome would be a very slow rate of reproduction. In addition, any male who broke the rules and left his mate for an unmated female would achieve reproductive success, making the whole system extremely unstable. For all these reasons, polyandry is very rare in nature.

Polygyny, on the other hand—the form of polygamy where one male mates with several females—is universally common. (Although "polygamy" can refer to either polyandry or polygyny, it is generally used interchangeably with polygyny.) Polygamy is probably the most "natural" way of mating. It is particularly predominant among mammals, where the fertilized embryo is retained within the female's body, reducing the male's post-conception nurturing to near-zero. Given the differences in size, strength, beauty, or social skills among males, it is inevitable that—in an unregulated sexual

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marketplace—successful males will collect multiple mating partners while unsuccessful males will be left with none. A successful male lion collects a pride of seven to ten female lions, mating with each of them as they come into heat. A male deer mates with about six to eight female deer. A silverback male gorilla collects a harem of five or six female gorillas. Biologists have even determined that the sexual dimorphism in a species—the size difference between males and females—is directly correlated to the size of the harem: i.e., the bigger the male is in relation to females, the more females he will control. On this scale, we are "slightly polygamous," with male humans outweighing females enough to collect about one and a half mates apiece.

Polygamy's Winners and Losers

POLYGAMY CREATES a clear social order, with distinct winners and losers. Let us look at how this works.

A dominant male wins because he can reproduce with as many females as he can reasonably control. Thus, he can "spread his genes" far and wide, producing many more progeny than he would be able to do under a different sexual regime.

But low-status females are winners, too. This is because: 1) Even the lowest-status females get to mate; there are no "old maids" in a polygamous society. 2) Nearly all females get access to high-status males. Since there are no artificial limits on the number of mates a male can collect, all females can attach themselves to a few relatively desirable males.

The effect upon high-status females is approximately neutral, but the clear losers are low-status males, the "bachelor herd" that is shut out of the mating equation. In some species, like elephants, the bachelor herd forms a dispirited gaggle living relatively meaningless lives on the edge of society. In others, like various monkeys, the subdominants form all-male gangs that combine their efforts to steal females from successful males. In a highly social species, such as baboons, the bachelor herd has been incorporated into the troop. Subdominant males form a "centurion guard" that protects the dominant male and his harem from predators. Among themselves, meanwhile, they engage in endless status struggles, trying to move up the social ladder toward their own mating possibilities.

Altogether, then, polygamy is a very natural and successful reproductive system. Since all females mate, the reproductive capacity of the population is maximized. There is also a strong selective drive toward desirable characteristics. As the operators of stud farms have long known, allowing only the swiftest and strongest males to breed produces the most desirable population.

Yet despite the clear reproductive advantages of polygamy, some species have abandoned it in favor of the more complex and artificially limiting system of monogamy. Why? The answer seems to be that monogamy is better adapted to the task of rearing offspring. This is particularly true where living conditions are harsh or where the offspring go through a long period of early dependency. The task is better handled by *two* parents than one. Quite literally, a species adopts monogamy "for the sake of the children."

Among animals, the most prominent example is birds. Because the fertilized egg is laid outside the female's body, a long period of nesting is required. This ties the male to the task of nurturing. Most bird species are monogamous through each mating season, and many mate for life.

Once mammalian development moved the gestating egg back inside the female's body, however, the need for "nesting" disappeared. With only a few exceptions (beavers, gibbons, orangutans), mammals are polygamous.

Yet as human beings evolved from our proto-chimp ancestors, the record is fairly clear that we reinvented monogamy. Present-day hunter-gatherers—who parallel the earliest human societies—are largely monogamous. Only with the invention of horticulture did many societies around the world revert to polygamy. Then, when animals were harnessed to the plow and urban civilizations were born, human societies again became almost exclusively monogamous. This wandering pattern of development has been the cause of much confusion. When monogamous Western European civilizations discovered the primitive polygamies of Africa and the South Seas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they assumed that the earliest human civilizations had been polygamous and had later evolved into the "higher" pattern of monogamy. It was only with the discovery of monogamous hunter-gatherers that the mystery was finally resolved. Rather than being an earlier form, polygamy is actually a later development in which many cultures have apparently become sidetracked. Both the earliest and the most advanced (economically successful) human civilizations are generally monogamous.

What has made monogamy so successful a format for human cooperation? First and foremost, monogamy creates a social contract that reduces the sexual competition among males. The underlying assumption of monogamy is that *every male gets a reasonable chance to mate*. As a result, the do-or-die quality of sexual competition among males abates. When one male can collect many females, mating takes on a deadly intensity. With monogamy, however, a more democratic outcome is assured. The bachelor herd disappears.

Second, because monogamy assures the possibility of reproduction to every member of the group, a social contract is born. One need only consider the sultan's harem—where male guards must be eunuchized—to realize that a society that practices polygamy has an inherently non-democratic character. No offer can be extended to marginal or outcast members that entices them to be part of the group. Under monogamy, however, society can function as a cohesive whole.

This is why, under monogamy, other forms of cooperation become possible. Males and females may pair off, but they also maintain other familial and social relationships. Both males and females can form task-ori-

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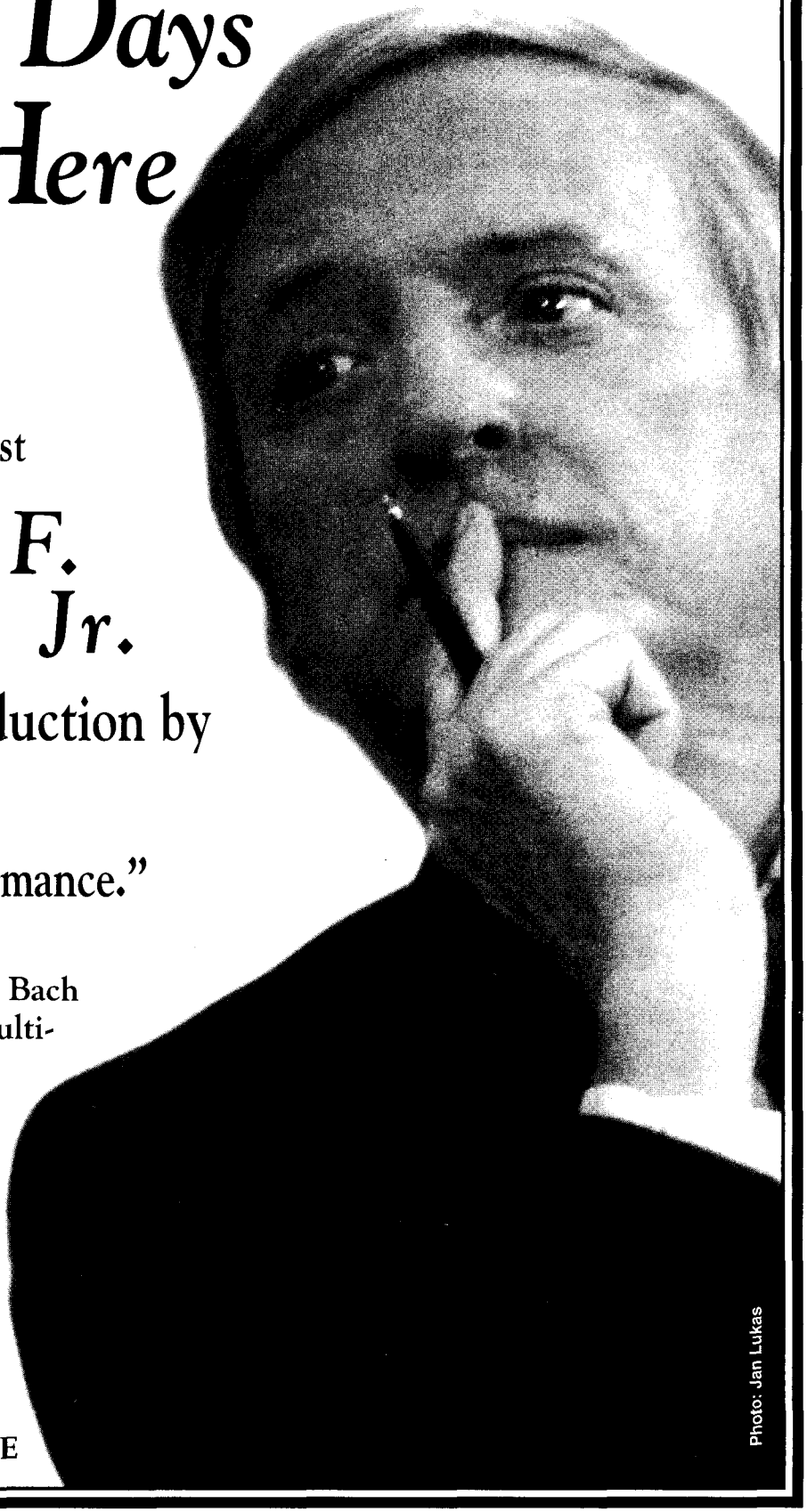
Happy Days Were Here Again

Reflections of a
Libertarian Journalist

William F. Buckley, Jr.

With an Introduction by
John Leonard



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RANDOM HOUSE

Photo: Jan Lukas

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ented groups (in primitive societies, the line between "men's" and "women's work" is always carefully drawn). As society becomes more complex, men and women frequently exchange roles and, although there is always a certain amount of sexual tension, males and females can work together in non-mating settings.

Other social primates have never reached the same level of complexity. Gibbons and orangutans are monogamous—but almost too much so: mated pairs are strongly attached to each other, but live in social isolation, rarely interacting with other members of the species. Gorilla bands generally ignore each other—except when males raid each other's harems. Baboon troops are more organized and task oriented, often encompassing as many as fifty to a hundred individuals. But behavior is rigidly hierarchical. Females are kept at the center of the troop, under close supervision of the alpha male and his associates. Subdominant males guard the periphery. Only the alpha and an occasional close ally mate with females as they come into heat.

Perhaps the most interesting attempt at creating a more complex society is among our closest relatives, the chimpanzees. Chimps practice a polymorphous polygamy, where every female takes care to mate with every male. Sex takes place in public and is relatively noncompetitive. When a female comes into estrus, her bottom turns bright pink, advertising her receptivity. Males queue up according to status, but every male, no matter how low on the social ladder, is allowed to copulate.

This creates its own social harmony. For males, it reduces sexual rivalry. Within the "brotherhood" of the tribe, there is little overt sexual competition (although it persists in other subtle ways). As a result, male chimps cooperate in establishing territories to exclude other males and occasionally hunt smaller animals such as monkeys.

The system also creates an advantage for females. Within a polygamous social group, one of the greatest hazards to child-rearing is male jealousy. The male owner of a female harem constantly guards against the possibility that he is wasting energy protecting the offspring of other males. When a new male lion displaces the former owner of a pride, he immediately kills off all the young in order to set the females to work reproducing his own offspring. The heads of polygamous monkey clans do the same thing.

But with chimpanzees, things are different. By taking care to mate with every male, a female assures each male member of the troop that he *might* be the father of her offspring. By "confusing paternity," females create a safe harbor for themselves, within which they are able to raise their offspring in relative tranquillity.

These techniques of unrestricted sexuality and indeterminate paternity have been tried from time to time in small human societies, notably among small religious and political sects. However, they have generally been a failure. The difficulty is that we have eaten too much of the tree of knowledge. We are too good at calculating which progeny are our own and which are not. (Child abuse and infanticide are most common when a man doubts his paternity.)

Rather than living in collective doubt, we have developed complex personalities that allow us to maintain private sexual relationships while sustaining a multilayered network of relatives, friends, acquaintances, associates, co-workers, and strangers with whom our interactions are mainly non-sexual. The result is the human society in which we all live.

The Price of Monogamy

HUMAN MONOGAMY thus holds out distinct advantages. Yet these advantages—as always—are bought at a price. Let us look at where the gains and forfeitures occur.

The winners under polygamy, you will recall, are high-status males and low-status females. Under monogamy, these parties lose their advantages, while compensating advantages are gained by high-status females and low-status males. High-status females no longer have to share their mates with low-status females, a particular advantage where long periods of child-rearing are involved. Low-status males, instead of being consigned to the bachelor herd, get a reasonable chance to a mate.

Perhaps we should pause here a moment to define what we mean by "high" and "low" status. High status usually has to do with desirable characteristics—beauty, strength, swiftness, bright feathers, or intelligence—whatever is admired by the species. In agencies where males fight for control of females (elk, lions, kangaroos), size and strength are usually the deciding factor. In species where females exercise some choice, physical beauty tends to play a greater role. As Darwin first noted, the bright plumage of the male bird is solely the result of generations of female selection.

In almost every species, youth is considered a desirable quality. In females, it implies a long, healthy life in which to raise offspring. In males, youth and vigor also suggest a wide variety of resources for child-rearing. Among the more social species, however, age, intelligence, and experience can play an important role. The alpha baboon is usually quite mature and sustains his access to females not through sheer strength or aggressiveness, but through the skillful formation of political alliances.

Under monogamy, another crucial characteristic is added—the willingness of the male to be a good provider. Yet this creates a dilemma for females. Unfortunately, the two favored characteristics—physical attractiveness and willingness to be a good provider—do not always come together. In fact, they often seem mutually exclusive. The peacock, the most beautiful of male birds, is notoriously a philanderer and a poor provider. With polygamy, females can ignore this problem and attach themselves to the most attractive males. With monogamy, however, females find themselves caught on the horns of the dilemma. Juggling these competing demands becomes a vexing responsibility—one that, at

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bottom, most females would ultimately like to escape.

Alternatives have always been available—at least covertly. In the 1950s, a research scientist began a routine experiment concerning natal blood type, trying to figure out which characteristics were dominant. To his astonishment, he found that 11 per cent of the babies born in American hospitals had blood types belonging to neither the mother nor the father—meaning the biological father was not the male listed on the birth certificate. The researcher was so dismayed by these findings that he suppressed them for over twenty years. Even at a time when monogamy was an unquestioned norm, at least 10 per cent of American women were resolving the female dilemma by tricking one man into providing for the child of another.

The Sources of Discontent

WITH ALL this in mind, then, let us look at where we should expect to find the major points of dissatisfaction with monogamy.

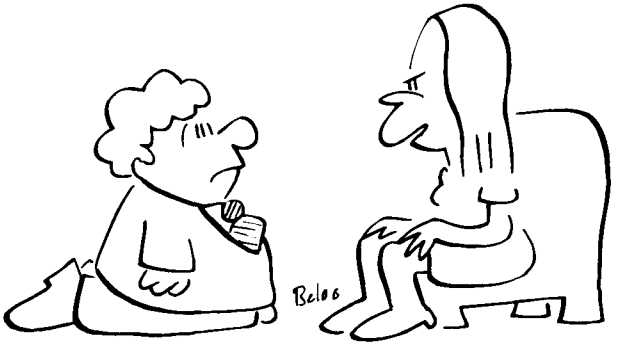
First and foremost, monogamy limits the mating urges of high-status males. Everywhere in nature, males have an underlying urge to mate with as many females as possible. Studies among barnyard animals have shown that a male that has exhausted himself mating with one female will experience an immediate resurgence of sexual desire when a new female is introduced into his pen. (This is dubbed the "Coolidge effect," after Calvin Coolidge, who once observed it while making a presidential tour of a barnyard.)

"Hogamous, higamous, men are polygamous. Higamous, hogamous, women monogamous," wrote Ogden Nash, and the experience in all societies has been that the male urge to be polygamous is the weakest link in the monogamous chain. This has become particularly true in America's mobile culture, where status-seeking males are often tempted to change wives as they move up the social ladder. "Serial monogamy" is the name we have given it, but a better term might be "rotating polygamy." A serious op-ed article in the *New York Times* a few years ago proposed that polygamy be legalized so that men could be compelled to support their earlier wives even as they move on to younger and more attractive women.

Marital infidelity, the fathering of illegitimate children, the pursuit of younger women, the "bimbo" and "trophy wife" syndromes—all are essential breaches of the monogamous social contract. When a Donald Trump deserts his wife and children for a woman almost twenty years his junior, he is obviously "wrecking a home" and violating monogamy's implicit understanding that children should be supported until maturity. But he is doing something else as well. By mating with a much younger, second woman, he is also limiting the mating possibilities of younger men. One swallow does not make a summer, but repeated over and over, this pattern produces real demographic consequences. In societies that practice polygamy, competition over available females is always more intense.

The problems with male infidelity, then, are fairly clear. What is not always so obvious is that women's commitment to monogamy is also somewhat circumscribed. The difficulties are twofold: 1) the general dissatisfaction of all women in being forced to choose between attractive males and good providers; and 2) the particular dissatisfaction among low-status women at being confined to the pool of low-status men.

In truth, low-status people of both sexes—or perhaps more significantly, people who are chronically dissatisfied with their status—form a continuing challenge to any monogamous society. Unless there is an overwhelming cultural consensus that marriage and the joint raising of children forms the highest human happiness (which some people think it does), low-status males and females are likely to feel cheated by the relatively narrow pool of mates available to them. Their



"I know your type! You want to marry me just because I'm a woman*!"*

resentments and underlying desire to disrupt the rules of the game form a constant undercurrent of discontent in any monogamous society.

For males, one obvious way of by-passing the rules is rape. Although feminists, in their never-ending effort to repeal biology, have insisted that rape reflects some amorphous "hatred against women," the more obvious interpretation is that it is a triumph of raw sexual desire over the more complex rules of social conduct. Rape overwhelmingly involves low-status men seeking sex with women who are otherwise inaccessible to them. (Rape is even more of a problem in polygamous societies, because of the more limited options for low-status males.) If "hatred" is involved, it is more likely to be general resentment of monogamy's restrictions, which inaccessible, high-status women may come to represent. But this is all secondary. The basic crime of rape is the violation of a woman's age-old biological right to choose her own sexual partners.

The other avenues for low-status males are prostitution and pornography. Each offers access to higher-status females, albeit under rather artificial circumstances. Individual females may benefit from pornography and prostitution in that they are paid (however poorly) for their participation. There is always a laissez-faire argument for allowing both. But when they become public and widespread, pornography and prostitu-

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tion become another nagging reminder of the dissatisfactions some people will always feel with monogamy. In other words, they disrupt "family values."

Female dissatisfaction with monogamy, on the other hand, is not always as obvious. Yet the restrictions put upon females—particularly low-status ones—will always be present and, in their own way, form their own undercurrent of discontent.

The principal female dissatisfaction is the dilemma of finding a mate who is *both* physically attractive *and* a good provider. As many and many a woman has discovered, it is much easier to get an attractive male into bed with you for the night than to keep him around in the morning.

The Murphy Brown Alternative

THERE IS, HOWEVER, a practical alternative. This is to return to the greater freedom of polygamy, where females can choose the most attractive males without regard to forming a permanent bond. This, of course, is the essence of "single motherhood."

The rise of single motherhood is basically the expression of female discontent with monogamy. Rising female economic success makes it more practical (social scientists have long noted that marriage becomes more unstable as females become more economically independent). This undoubtedly accounts for the rising rate of divorce and single motherhood among affluent Americans.

But the emergence of almost universal single motherhood among the black underclass undercuts the purely economic argument (except, of course, to the degree that female independence has been subsidized by the welfare system). Black women are not opting for single motherhood because of rising economic success. What the availability of welfare does, however, is enable them to dispense with the courtship rituals of monogamy and choose the most desirable man available to them, regardless of the man's willingness or ability to provide domestic support. It is this dynamic of liberated female sexual choice—and not just the greater economic support offered by welfare—that is driving black single motherhood today.

The essence of single motherhood, then, is status-jumping. By dispensing with the need to make a single choice, a woman can mate with a man who is far more desirable than any she could hope to retain under the artificial restraints of monogamy. The same dynamic is even more obvious among single mothers of the middle and upper classes. When asked to justify their choice, these women refer with surprising regularity to the unavailability of movie stars or other idealized males. ("I know so many women who were waiting for that Alan Alda type to come along," one unwed mother recently told *Newsweek*. "And they were waiting and waiting.") Yet when these women get themselves impregnated by otherwise unattainable men—or artificially inseminate themselves with accomplished doctors and lawyers, talented musicians, or Nobel Prize–winning scientists—what are they practicing but a contemporary form of high-tech polygamy?

The rebellion against monogamy, then, is being led by men dissatisfied because they cannot have more women and women dissatisfied with the choice of available men. (As an aging divorcee, Murphy Brown, despite her attractiveness, had a very limited pool of mating possibilities.) Yet each of these rebellions is driven by the most powerful human sexual dynamic—the desire of every living creature to produce offspring with the most desirable possible mating partners. Monogamy limits those desires.

The Homosexual Alternative

WHERE DOES homosexuality fit in all this? At its core, homosexuality is driven by a different dynamic. In every society, there is a small nucleus of men and women who feel uncomfortable with their sexual roles. For whatever reasons—biological, psychological, or a combination—they find it difficult or impossible to play the reproductive role dictated by their bodies and to mate with the opposite sex. This does not necessarily constitute a challenge to monogamy. Homosexuals and people with homosexual tendencies have often played important social roles. Priests, prophets, witch-doctors, artists, entertainers, cultural leaders—all have often been overtly or covertly homosexual or tinged with an undercurrent of ambiguous sexuality. All this forms no great social problem so long as homosexuality remains largely covert and marginal. The difficulty comes when it breaks out of the underground and becomes a mainstream alternative, particularly to the point of recruitment among the young. (Socrates, remember, was condemned to death for luring the youth of Athens into homosexuality.)

Once again, simple arithmetic begins to assert itself. When male homosexuality becomes widespread, it creates a dearth of eligible young men. This is particularly visible in urban environments. The growing population of male homosexuals in New York and other cities during the 1980s created the widely reported "man shortage" for young women. In the end, this large homosexual population seems to have induced an equally large lesbian population.

Are all these individuals really biologically determined to homosexuality? It seems doubtful. Rather, what seems to be happening is that homosexuality is becoming an acceptable form of protest for both men and women who do not like the choices offered to them by monogamy.

Once again, the problem is most pronounced with low-status people. For example, although there are undoubtedly some very attractive lesbian women, even a casual survey of the population reveals a very high incidence of members whose mating opportunities are obviously limited under monogamy. Moreover, the men who are available to them are themselves likely to be bitter and resentful over their choice of mates—in other words

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NATIONAL REVIEW West

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Harold Johnson

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CALIFORNIA'S IMMIGRATION WARS

Like other Americans, members of minority groups think immigration is out of control.

LANCE T. IZUMI

WHEN an acquaintance of mine ran for Congress last year, he found, much to his surprise, that the hottest issue in his Southern California district was not the battered economy but illegal immigration. In his district, as in other districts across the state, an almost unnoticed grassroots-voter revolt was in full swing.

Like the property-tax revolt before it, voter anger over illegal immigration had reached a critical mass that has now literally forced state lawmakers to stake out increasingly tough positions on the issue. Governor Pete Wilson's recent call for a constitutional amendment to withhold citizenship from the U.S.-born children of illegal immigrants is just the latest example of this trend.

Of course, like the skyrocketing property taxes that resulted in Proposition 13, the simple fact that some politicians may be using illegal immigration as a political ploy does not mean that the underlying issue itself lacks merit. Indeed, there may be no better indicator of illegal immigration's merit as a serious issue than the reaction of California's various minority communities.

(Continues on page West-5)

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THE WEEK IN THE WEST

■ Harvey Saferstein, president of the California Bar Association, says lawyer jokes should be considered "hate speech" and subject to increased criminal and civil penalties. Don't laugh. This is not a lawyer joke.

■ With real-estate prices plummeting in Southern California, the rental market is glutted with empty office buildings. So what's that huge fancy new office tower under construction in Santa Ana? Right, a government project. California's State Compensation Insurance Fund, the quasi-public agency that provides workers-compensation coverage for high-risk employers, is sparing no expense on its $29 million, 225,000 square-foot palace. Why couldn't the state rent space in one of the many vacant office buildings in the area? "We like to build," a fund official explains. Sort of like art for art's sake.

■ Go West, young welfare recipient. That's the message the Golden State has been beaming for years; its monthly AFDC payments are nearly double those of some other states. One result: nearly a third of the city of San Bernardino, first step on California's welfare trail, is on the dole. "Every two years we're building another welfare office that will hold another 200 emplyees," points out Robert McDonald, associate director of San Bernardino County's Department of Public Services. No wonder so many taxpaying families can be seen in U-Hauls going East.

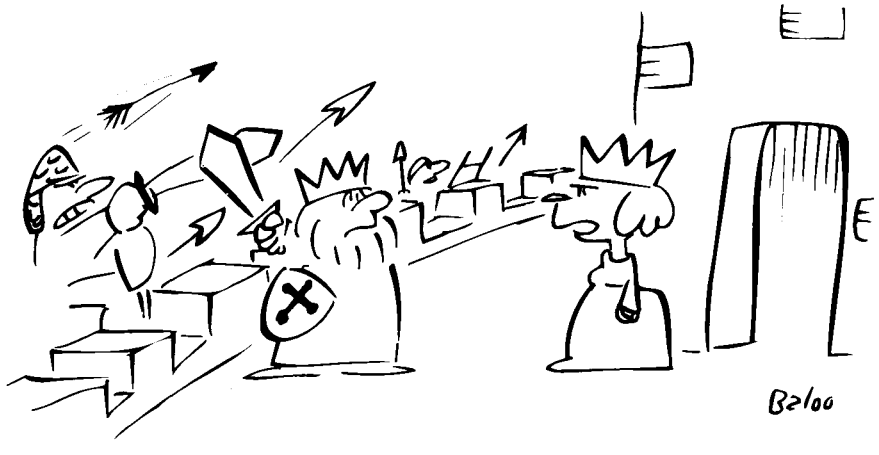
■ Top California Republican officials asked Rush Limbaugh to grace the state party's convention in September, to help Governor Pete Wilson's re-elect effort, but Rush couldn't make it. Why not? Most speculate he's trying to distance himself from partisan events. Maybe. But he was also lobbied to stay away by some GOP dissenters who argued that Dittoheads equate tax hikes with Wilson just as much they do with Bill Clinton.

■ Governor Wilson has tried to slow the influx of welfarites by reducing benefits for immigrants from other states. But Federal Judge David Levi recently struck the measure down, offering one of the most penumbral arguments to emanate from the judiciary lately: he ruled that the state was violating people's right to travel and enjoy equal protection of the laws. Query: would federal judge jokes be hate crimes too?

■ Oregon is one of the few states lucky enough to have avoided a state sales tax: voters have rejected eight sales-tax proposals over the years, and enacted a sweeping property-tax rollback just three years ago. But Democratic Governor Barbara Roberts and the state's legislative leadership want to spend more money, so they're pushing a 5 per cent sales tax on this November's ballot. They just don't get it.

■ Washington state racked up a billion-dollar budget surplus in the boom years 1990 and 1991, so the legislature naturally started spending like Michael Jackson in a toy store. Result: a *two* billion dollar deficit. The legislature's answer: passing one of the largest tax increases in state history. Citizen activists have qualified two ballot initiatives to safeguard against future fiscal orgies. One proposal would largely roll back the new levies and attempt to restrain future budget increases; the other would also enforce a spending limit and subject all future proposed tax increases to popular vote. Naturally, both initiatives have given the big spenders a case of the shrills. Is there any sweeter sound?

■ Officials with the state Air Resources Board (cough, cough) say the South Coast Air Quality Management District (hack, spit) isn't being tough enough on Southern California employers—more



"This is the last time I'm telling you—your dinner's getting cold!"

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fines and other sanctions are needed to punish corporate polluters. But the suggestion that the AQMD has been a puppy dog draws bitter laughter from people who work (or used to) in industries terrorized by the smog cops: furniture, metal-processing, and other lines of manufacture. The targets of regulatory zeal point out that that most air pollution comes not from businesses, but from cars and trucks, especially old clunkers. But the zealots don't seem interested in new technologies that could pinpoint the dirty vehicles. It's more fun to power-trip at the expense of employers, employees, and consumers.

■ One of the Democrats' Hollywood sugar daddies will be opening his purse even wider: record mogul David Geffen's decision to start spending more lavishly is signaled by his hiring of Bob Burkett as a key aide. Burkett is a Democratic operative who had previously been political point man for entertainment executive Ted Field, known for raining gold on left-of-center crusades. If Geffen means to try to outshine Field as a cash cow, he has the resources: an estimated billion-dollar fortune. "I see myself getting as involved as it's possible to get in promoting public policy," Geffen told one interviewer. "And I think that I can be very effective in that area." The $100,000 he gave the DNC last year could prove small change if he makes good on that vow. Here's a fellow smart enough to make himself a modern Croesus but daft enough to think Bill Clinton is good for the economy. Another reminder that the Hollywood rich *are* different from the rest of us: They have less sense and more money.

■ Peter Guber, chairman of Sony Pictures Entertainment, tells *Esquire* that his wife, Lynda, was approached by a gunman on the Pacific Coast Highway as she waited at a light. When she started screaming and nearby drivers formed a barricade, the thugs fled. "I'll tell you, I'm becoming very Daryl-Gatesian in my attitudes," says Guber. Producer Dawn Steel, who's been reading *The Hundred Best Towns in America*, seconds the sentiment: because of L.A. lawlessness, "I don't know how much longer I want to stay here. . . . All of us here have been liberal thinkers our whole lives. Now we're very conservative on law and order." Even in Hollywood, the muggers are a reality—and vice versa.

■ Planned Parenthood officials have prevailed on the Modesto, California, school board to ditch a sexual-life curriculum. Why? The program, called "Sex Respect," is guilty of stressing—shhhh!—abstinence. PP charges that this peddles a "fear and shame-based" message, presumably putting teen pregnancy, VD, emotional turmoil, and other blessing of sexual freedom in a bad light. When *parents* protest a sex-education program, of course, it's called "censorship." When taxpayer-funded PP does it, it's just called progress.

■ The *Sacramento Union* has detailed some cushy pension deals for state employees—and warns that the system is so lavish it might soon collapse. Pensions just for state judges have created a $1.6 *billion* unfunded liability. Other morsels: Former state controller Alan Cranston (who achieved his greatest notoriety as a U.S. Senator) knocks down a pension larger than the salary he got on the job. The widow of one Board of Equalization member gets $164,000 annually. Richard Nevins, a former member of that same board (whose chief duty was showing up at the monthly meeting), now draws a cool $194,814 in pension benefits. According to "America's Protected Class," a report from the American Legislative Exchange Council, public employees in California and elsewhere won bigger raises and more benefit increases over the last 12 years than comparable workers in the private sector. They don't call it twelve years of greed for nothing.

■ For all their squeals of pain over budget cuts, most officials at California's public colleges and universities aren't looking for ways to cut fat. That according to the independent California Higher Education Policy Center. If the idea of streamlining didn't cause them night sweats, the education bureaucrats could start by getting kids graduated more quickly. Fewer than one-third of enrollees at the University of California now get their diplomas in four years. Underworked professors could also be asked for a bit more teaching time. And campus facilities could be used more efficiently. According to Robert Wilson, president of California State University, Chico, "Many senior campuses concentrate their work in the time between 9 A.M. and 4 P.M.. After 4, a cannon shot across many a quad would produce few casualties. If all campuses were to operate full-bore from 7 A.M. to 10 P.M. plus Saturday forenoons, campus capacity—excepting laboratory sections—would nearly double at little cost." You don't need a PhD to identify plenty of other possible economics; in fact, maybe it takes an advanced degree in order *not* to see them.

■ Bernard Nathanson may be on to something. The former California Coastal Commission member was convicted of extortion after using his post to try to get his palms greased by Sylvester Stallone and other Hollywood figures who wanted permission to improve their beachfront homes. In pleading for a light sentence, Mr. Nathanson offered an interesting defense: by offering to help Sly and others in return for cash, he was merely doing "something similar to cutting through bureaucratic red tape." Call that chutzpah, but it has its kernal of insight. How different is his shakedown game from what goes on every

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day in Sacramento? It's hardly unknown for regulatory proposals to be introduced less out of concern for the public welfare than as an invitation to affected companies to make contributions to head off the threat. Most of what government does legally is a crime. Nevertheless, Nathanson deserves his punishment, but we admire his ingenuity.

■ California ranks fifth in the nation in cruelty to taxpayers, says the California Taxpayer Association: ninth in personal income tax, twelfth in state sales tax, 21st in property tax, fourth in corporate tax, and seventh in fees and assessments. All of which also makes it the highest-taxing state among the Western states—the ones with which it competes for jobs. Note that these rankings don't include indirect levies (building fees and zoning restrictions can add up to 50 per cent to the cost of a Southern California dwelling) or punitive business regulations. *Forbes* points out that California's marginal tax rate on income is higher even than the level in the old British welfare state. But look on the bright side: the nearest thing to a tan in England is rust.

■ Because the Federal Government has declared the Delta Smelt an endangered species, California water authorities say they will soon be releasing up to three million acre-feet of water from state water systems to help save the little fellows. A single acre-foot of water, in case you're wondering, is about what a human household consumes in a year. Thus the Delta Smelt will cost the California chapter of the human race about as much of the wet stuff as Los Angeles would use annually.

■ In a recent newspaper column, Los Angeles Mayor Dick Riordan hinted he's backing off his promised campaign to sell or lease the city's airport. Undoubtedly the tribunes of the status quo are powerful at City Hall, but this idea doesn't deserve to be grounded. By some estimates, the airport carries a market value of as high as $1 billion, and that's not counting the $10 million a year the city could reap in property taxes if it were sold. Quite a bit more than the big fat zero the airport yields for the city right now. Selling LAX would lead to a better airport, argues Robert Poole of the Reason Foundation. "In privatized airports in Canada and Britain, the private sector invests money in making the airport a more pleasant place, meaning a greater variety of services, which makes for more profits." Safety might also improve, because a private owner might be forced by his insurance carriers to upgrade radar and other equipment to monitor the location of incoming and outgoing flights. Mr. Riordan showed during the campaign that he understood all this; he shouldn't let the nay-sayers clip his wings.

■ The *Los Angeles Times* reportedly is considering moving out of its historic building on Spring Street, across from City Hall. The bad news is that they would just be moving across downtown, and not out of state.

Bilingualism's Forked Tongue

THE MEXICAN government just sent 40,000 new Spanish textbooks to the Los Angeles Unified School District. Twenty bilingual teachers will follow, all in an effort to beef up the district's bilingual-ed program.

Hasn't anyone read the verdict on bilingual schooling by the Little Hoover Commission? In a July report, the commission, which focuses on efficiency in state government, branded California's bilingual-ed programs a colossal waste of resources.

That assessment will come as no surprise to anyone who attended the hearing that kicked off the commission's seven-month study. At that session, state school bureacurats revealed a laughable lack of knowledge about their own bilingual instruction system. "Yes, we have no answer" was, in effect, the response to questions from commissioners about cost, participation, and success rates among students.

With this absence of accountability, it's little wonder there's not much to show for all the dollars and effort. "Each year for the past decade, fewer than 60,000 students [statewide] have been redesignated as fluent in English, despite the increasing numbers of students who need help and the increasing resources dedicated to their education," says Nathan Shapell, chairman of the Little Hoover panel.

Talk to a teacher who isn't part of the network of bilingual instructors, and you're likely to hear about kids who haven't learned English even after years of bilingual schooling. Says former U.S. Civil Rights Commission official Linda Chavez: "Even the most optimistic appraisals of bilingual programs show that Spanish-speaking students who are taught in Spanish are no more likely to keep up in math or social studies than similar children who are put into intensive English programs in which all of their lessons are taught in English." Indeed, the lagging test scores for Hispanic kids suggest they're victimized by the bilingual system.

It's time to start demanding high standards of those kids—and insisting they learn English quickly. Anything less is a sign of disrespect.

■ NR West would welcome story ideas and news tips from any of the Western states. Send material to: NR West/Claremont Institute, 250 West First St., 91711.

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(Continued from page West-1)

On the one hand, liberal minority elites have reacted as expected. A Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund spokesman stated that illegal immigrants are here to work and "they aren't here to rip off the system." Bill Tamayo of the San Francisco–based Asian Law Caucus advised, "We need to look at how our nation is spending its money on bombs, bombers, the savings-and-loan bailout, and other expenses before we condemn immigrants for receiving public assistance." Translation: welfare for the Pentagon is bad, but welfare for illegals is okay.

Liberal minority activists, however, are generals without an army on this issue. Polls show that blacks, Hispanics, and Asians are strongly opposed to illegal immigration. A recent California Field poll found that among Hispanics, 64 per cent view illegal immigration as a serious problem. Another survey found that among Mexican-Americans, 75 per cent agreed with the statement that there were too many immigrants, both illegal and legal, coming into the country. This anger was a key factor in the State Assembly Latino Caucus' recent surprise support of various tough measures aimed at curbing illegal immigration.

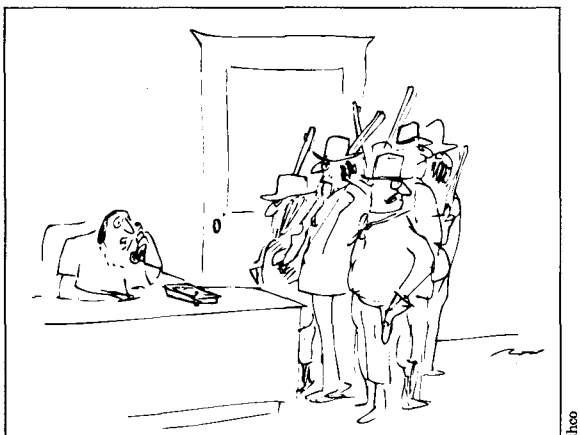
WHY so much hostility against illegal immigration among those who might be expected to be the most sympathetic to illegal border crossers?

First, the simple fact is that most citizen-members of minority communities are taxpayers and are therefore being forced to underwrite part of the vast array of subsidies and benefits that are now being bestowed upon illegal immigrants by local, state, and federal governments.

Take, for example, welfare spending. In 1988–89, 39,000 children of illegal immigrants received $45 million in state AFDC welfare payments. By the current fiscal year, the number of AFDC eligible children of illegal immigrants will have climbed to almost 177,000, at a cost to the state of $236 million (a 424 per cent cost increase over five years ago).

An even more expensive area is health care. In 1988–89, just under 24,000 illegal immigrants were eligible for medical services provided by the state. This cost state taxpayers $22 million. By the current fiscal year, the number of illegals eligible for state-provided medical services had risen to nearly 369,000 at a cost to the state of $368 million.

The biggest expense of all, though, is education. This year $1.1 billion in state tax dollars will be used to educate the 255,000 children of illegal immigrants enrolled in California's public schools. This is nearly 100,000 more than were in the public schools five years ago.



"The local watchdog group to see you, sir."

© Ross / Rothco

The point is that even if illegal immigrants do provide some benefits to the economy (more about that shortly), the undeniable fact is that they are one of the critical factors in the state's chronic and growing budget deficits (estimated to balloon to $15 billion by the year 2000).

In addition to fiscal costs, there are the social costs. Currently, for example, California's state prisons hold 16,400 illegal aliens convicted of felonies. This is a threefold increase over the number in prison five years ago. Illegal aliens now make up a startling 14 per cent of the state prison population, and would, by themselves, fill eight state prisons to capacity. Most disturbing, though, is the fact that more than one-third of these prisoners are serving time for violent offenses and 43 per cent have been convicted of major drug offenses.

Just as the vast majority of crimes committed by blacks are against other blacks, so Hispanics and other minorities are the main victims of the crimes committed by Hispanic illegal immigrants. It is little wonder then that many minority citizens view the illegal immigration problem with a sense of urgency.

Perhaps the most controversial reason for minority unrest over the illegal-immigration question is the issue of jobs. Many blacks feel illegal border crossers are taking entry-level jobs from black citizens. Civil-rights activists and libertarian conservatives of the Julian Simon school counter that immigrants, both legal and illegal, are a net boon to the domestic economy.

Until recently, the empirical evidence appeared to support the latter argument. New studies on skill levels of immigrants, however, may change all this. For instance, a recent University of Texas study found that unemployment among blacks tended to rise in areas with large numbers of immigrants and a soft labor market. George Borjas, a Cuban-born economics professor at the University of California at San Diego, who has written extensively on immigrants and the job market, has observed that low-skilled American workers (a group that is disproportionately minority) are being adversely affected by the 1980s immigrant wave because of the comparatively low education and job skill levels of newer immigrants.

While most experts, including Borjas, agree that further study is needed, it seems fair to say that in California, with its current near-double-digit unemployment and poor job-creation prospects, competition for low-skill jobs between illegal immigrants and citizen or legally resident minorities will be essentially a zero-sum game.

Beyond the immediate problems of fiscal effects, crime, and employment displacement lies the broader question of assimilation. As the number of immigrants has swelled (300,000 legal and 100,000 illegal immigrants come to California every year, with the resident illegal immigrant population estimated to be between 1.3 and 2 million), it has become easier for individual immigrants not to assimilate. It is now possible to get by quite ade-

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Mr. Izumi, research director for the Claremont Institute's Golden State Center for Policy Studies, served as chief speechwriter for California Gov. George Deukmejian.

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quately in many California cities without using English or coming into contact with the majority culture.

Government policy, which used to strongly encourage assimilation, has become a major impediment. California's bilingual-education program is a case in point. According to a recent state report, only 5 per cent of the approximately 1.1 million non-English speaking students in California ever become fluent in English.

The disastrous social consequences of such failed government policies cannot be overstated. As Peter Brimelow has noted, "modernization puts a premium on linguistic unity." Today's open societies "are held together by information flows," and anything "that impedes those information flows renders them less efficient."

Brimelow's observations are being validated. Unable to communicate in the dominant language, and therefore unable to assimilate into mainstream culture, non-English-speaking students drop out of school at high rates and rarely apply for college. They end up forming a permanent underclass that not only makes society less economically efficient, but also erodes social harmony and good will. And these negative effects are felt first and foremost by the minority communities in the inner cities where the bulk of these immigrants live.

While we should not dismiss lightly the arguments of those who say that immigration, even of the illegal variety, is a net positive, the rapidly accumulating empirical evidence to the contrary puts the burden of proof on immigration partisans. Indeed, we should remember that simply because a politician says that something is a disaster doesn't mean that it isn't. □

Initiative in California

THE 174 FIGHT

California's school-choice initiative may lose, but at least it sheds light on the real problems.

HAROLD JOHNSON

SACRAMENTO developer Phil Angelides is a former chairman of the California Democratic Party and now a candidate for state treasurer. He is also, along with every other major officeholder or office-seeker in his party, a fountain of impassioned rhetoric against Proposition 174, the school-choice initiative on the November ballot. "I am committed to giving the public schools more time to reform themselves," he said recently. "I can't support abandoning our historic commitment to the tradition of the common school."

But when pressed by his interviewer, Mr. Angelides acknowledged he sends his own kids to private schools. "There are a lot of problems" in the Sacramento public schools.

Why won't the well-heeled liberal politicians—and the throngs of teachers and school bureaucrats—who shelter their own offspring from the government schools allow the less affluent to do the same? This is the kind of question that voucher supporters believe will hit home with the California electorate. The school-choice initiative would offer tax-funded scholarships worth $2,600 toward tuition at private and religious schools, while establishing greater choice within the public system as well. Supporters, such as lead campaign strategist Ken Kachigian, tout the proposal as a means to empower families who now have no option but to patronize the schools that establishment figures like Angelides praise, but shun.

"Nice gesture."

Surveys indicate that the arguments for choice resonate with voters who get to hear them. But what remains unclear is whether the initiative's backers will have the resources to transmit their message over the opponents' boom-box of alarmism.

TEACHERS "do not believe choice is in their interest," says Ralph Flynn, executive director of the 250,000-member California Teachers Association. So his union, along with allied groups, is in the process of dumping up to $13 million into a media campaign that trafficks in distortions and scare stories—e.g., that scholarhip money will go to witches covens or "David Koresh" schools. Initiative opponents got the attorney general's offices to change its official ballot title, replacing the word "choice" with "voucher"—a term pollsters find turns off voters.

A recent Field poll reported 46 per cent of those surveyed opposing the measure, with 38 per cent in favor. But if the proposals's prospects are uncertain, there are still reasons for cautious optimism. The measure has already shown considerable resilience, surviving a furious effort to kill it in the cradle. It made the ballot despite shrill opposition from former state schools Superintendent Bill Honig (who has since been deposed after conviction on felony conflict-of-interest charges) and a major campaign, including physical intimidation, by school-union officials to keep people away from signature-gatherers.

Supporters may be short of cash for media buys, but breaking-news headlines provide plenty of unpaid advertising against the status quo. The latest shooting in the L.A. public schools came on the opening day of the new school year (though there will probably have been more by the time you read this). SAT results show California's average score falling from 902 (in

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a range of 400 to 1600) to 899, and its rank among the states dropping from 34th to 35th. And the Bill Honig scandal (he shepherded public funds to a consultancy run by his wife) remains in the papers with the introduction of legislation that some believe might let him reclaim his job.

Meanwhile, the most articulate advocates are on side of the initiative, starting with former U.S. Education Secretary William Bennett, who will be camping in the state during the weeks leading up to the election.

Not surprisingly, polls suggest the plan is most popular with families in the worst scholastic ghettoes—the war zones of South-Central L.A., where teachers shout "duck and cover" when they fear gang-related gunfire. But suburban Republican voters, wary about disturbing existing arrangements so radically, will be a harder sell.

Yet no matter what its eventual fate, the voucher drive offers a forum for questioning the school establishment's ceaseless complaints of underfunding. Taxpayers have rained torrents of dollars on the system, with K–12 outlays rising over 110 per cent during the Eighties, while the student population increased only 23 per cent. Test scores, meanwhile, stayed flat.

The *California Almanac* reports that teachers make up 85 per cent of the workforce in the state's private schools. But only 44 per cent of the public schools' employees are teachers. The voucher debate shines a welcome light on such facts, and allows critics of the establishment to wonder aloud just what all those battalions of bureaucrats are doing. As Mr. Bennett notes, they can't *all* be handing out condoms. □

The Hit List

ARE YOU NOW, or have you ever been, a Republican, a conservative, or a member of an organized religion? If so, according to the National Education Association and the affiliated California Teachers Association, you are part of the "Far Right."

And thanks to a teacher at Madera High School in Orange County, I've got an interesting document—a handout from a workshop sponsored by the CTA a few months back at the Madera Unified School District office, titled "Extremist Attacks on Academic Freedom."

The introduction declares that "CTA believes that . . . Far Right extremist groups who fight against the basic human and civil rights to which CTA is committed are detrimental to public education." Worse, these "Far Right" groups try to "recruit young people in our schools."

Who is the "Far Right?"

Here's part of the handout's "enemies list":

"Political Action, Lobbying, Fund-Raising": American Coalition for Traditional Values, American Conservative Union, American Life Lobby, Americans for Effective Law Enforcement, California Coalition for Traditional Values, Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, Conservative Caucus, Fund for a Conservative Majority, Gun Owners of America, National Conservative Political Action Committee, National Rifle Association.

"Anti-Union": American Employers for Free Enterprise, Concerned Educators Against Forced Unionism, National Association of Manufacturers, National Right-to-Work Committee, National Right-to-Work Legal Foundation.

"Education": American Education Coalition, Christian Educators Association International, Citizens for Excellence in Education, Concerned Parents and Taxpayers for Better Education, Educational Voucher Institute, Learn, National Association of Christian Educators, National Center for Constitutional Studies, Parents' Rights.

"Think Tanks, Research, Promotion of Ideology": American Enterprise Institute, Black Alternatives, Cato Institute, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Ethics and Public Policy Center, Heritage Foundation, Hoover Institution, House Republican Study Committee, Institute for Free Enterprise.

"Preachers and Politics": Campus Crusade for Christ, Evangelical Free Church Liberty Foundation (Moral Majority), Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network, Pat Robertson's 700 Club, Pat Robertson himself, Religious Roundtable.

"Pro-Family": Christian Women for America, Concerned Women for America, Eagle Forum, National Pro-Family Coalition, National Pro-life PAC, National Right to Life Committee, Pro-Family Forum.

"Tax Resistance": American Tax Reduction Movement, National Tax Limitation Committee, National Taxpayers Union.

"Media": Accuracy in Media, *The Conservative Digest*, *Human Events*, and, get this, "television network news" (yes, even Dan Rather is part of the "Far Right.")

Don't belong to or support any of the above? You are still on the "enemies list" if you believe parents and taxpayers, rather than the teachers unions, should control public schools. The NEA and CTA state that the following "go beyond rational, constructive criticism": "attacks on NEA" or saying that "NEA is ruining our schools"; "claiming that because patrons pay taxes, school employees are citizens' personal employees and educators must teach exactly what parents want"; "filing lawsuits against districts or school personnel"; "initiating recalls of board members or superintendents"; "filibustering at the board meetings" (i.e., speaking up); "promoting school choice"; "flooding the local newspapers with carefully timed and orchestrated content"; "asking for educational personnel records"; and "questioning the credentials of targeted educators." The basic gist here is that parents and taxpayers should keep their wallets open, their mouths shut.

The workshop handout ends by restating the NEA/CTA's goals, including "the advancement of the professional status, personal economic security, and welfare of all [NEA/CTA] members."

There is no better argument for breaking up the educationists' quasi-monopoly on our education dollars than this smoking gun of a document. —LEON MCKINNEY

Mr. McKinney is a freelance writer based in Huntington, Calif.

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WEST WORLD

■ Former Palo Alto U.S. Rep. **Tom Campbell**, who earlier this summer was all for Proposition 174, the California school-choice initiative—"You have to trust the marketplace"—now opposes it. His backflip will keep the teachers' union from fighting his bid for a seat in the state senate, but has cost him the support of longtime mentor **Milton Friedman**. In an open letter Prof. Friedman withdrew his support for Campbell's candidacy and severely criticized his ex-student. . . . A key strategist for the anti-school-choice campaign is **Bob Nelson**, the Orange County political consultant who did PR for a group of "Republicans for **Clinton**" last year and was rewarded with a job on the transition team. . . . Gov. **Pete Wilson**'s continued inablility (as of press time) to endorse the voucher measure could return to bite him. At the **National Review Institute**'s recent Conservative Summit in San Diego, **Bill Bennett** said he'd hit Wilson on the issue if Wilson tried his hand in presidential primaries. . . . Wilson's education secretary, **Maureen DiMarco**, doesn't share the governor's shyness on the subject: She'll tell anyone who asks that she's against vouchers. She'll also tell: the public schools are *not* top-heavy with administrators—so there.

■ **Ken Maddy**, who has met few tax increases he couldn't hug, is safe for now as GOP leader of California state senate. But conservative Sen. **Rob Hurtt** hints he might try a coup next year. Hurtt's prestige shot up after the senate candidate he backed in a Northern California special election, **Maurice Johannessen**, demolished Maddy's candidate, liberal former Assemblywoman **Bev Hansen**. . . . Among those urging **Bruce Herschensohn** to run for U.S. House seat that is likely to be vacated by **Chris Cox** of Orange County (Cox hopes to get the Republican nod to challenge Democrat Sen. **Dianne Feinstein**) is Herschensohn's old boss, **Richard Nixon**. All fingers point to Orange County Republican chair **Tom Fuentes** as coming up with the draft-Herschensohn idea. . . . U.S. House Speaker **Tom Foley** of Washington is spearheading the court fight against term-limit measure passed in his home state. Term-limit Supporters have secured, on pro-bono basis, **Griffin Bell**, **Jimmy Carter**'s attorney general. . . . University of Illinois Law Professor **Ronald Rotunda** points out that term limits on federal legislators are merely an extension of powers the states have been exercising for more than a century—powers long ago acknowledged by the Supreme Court. For instance, "almost all states require that U.S. representatives be elected by district within the state, even though the Constitution only lists state residency as a qualification."

■ The National Endowment for the Arts has cut off the bucks for San Diego aesthetes whose performance art was to hand out $10 bills to illegal aliens. . . . Meanwhile, back home in Oregon, former NEA chairman **John Frohnmayer** urges that more dollars be shoveled at the agency. "If Clinton asked me, I'd tell him to stay the course on the NEA. Let the Republicans filibuster until the next election.". . . When cultural conservatives offer gripe about Hollywood fare such as **Steve Bochco**'s *NYPD Blue*, with its nude love scenes, cries of censorship rise from executive suites. But demands from pressure groups like the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation don't get such a cold shoulder. In the wake of its crusades, at least 14 gay-themed feature projects are in play, according to *Us Magazine*, including AIDS films by **Francis Ford Coppola** (*The Cure*) and **Jonathan Demme** (*Philadelphia*). Before shooting began, GLAAD activists were invited to review *Philadelphia*'s script. . . . Likewise, Environment Media Association has reportedly influenced hundreds of projects in the direction of ecological zealotry, helped by such heavyweight patrons as **Robert Redford**, **Michael Eisner**, and **Michael Ovitz**. . . . *Bob Roberts* producer **Forrest Murray** has been enlisted as an official Democratic film mogul; it's reported he'll probably advise on ways to package and pitch **Hillary Rodham Clinton**'s health-care blockbuster.

■ During a televised "surfin' safari," an interviewer asked the tube-riding Republican Rep. **Dana Rohrabacher** (Calif.) to explain his curious friendship with the rock 'n' roll group **Van Halen**. His reply: "They're good Americans and they hate Communism."

"It's not a bad speech, but where the hell's the rhetoric?"

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they "hate women." One need only read the melancholy chronicle of Andrea Dworkin's experiences with a string of sadistic, self-loathing men to realize why this woman has become one of the nation's leading exponents of lesbianism. The professed ideology of both these groups is that they "hate" the other sex. Yet it would be much more correct to say that they *hate the members of the opposite sex to which monogamy has confined them.*

(I sometimes think the high point of America's commitment to monogamy came around 1955, the year that Paddy Chayevsky's low-budget *Marty* was a surprise box-office success and winner of the Academy Award. The story told of two plain people who, after numerous personal rejections, discover each other at a Saturday-night dance hall. The message of the movie, as articulated so often during that era, was that "For every girl there's a boy and for every boy there's a girl.")

Despite its disruptive nature, homosexuality as a rebellion has little permanent impact until older biological urges begin to assert themselves and homosexuals want to have children. For men, there are few options. Apart from a few highly publicized cases, there are few homosexual men raising families. But for women, once again, we are back to single motherhood. Numerous lesbian couples are now having children, and lesbians have organized the most sophisticated sperm banks. How these children will react ten or fifteen years down the road to the realization that they are the children of anonymous sperm donors is anybody's guess. But it seems likely they will have difficulty forming monogamous unions themselves and their resentments will only add to the sea of dissatisfactions.

Polygamy in Our Future?

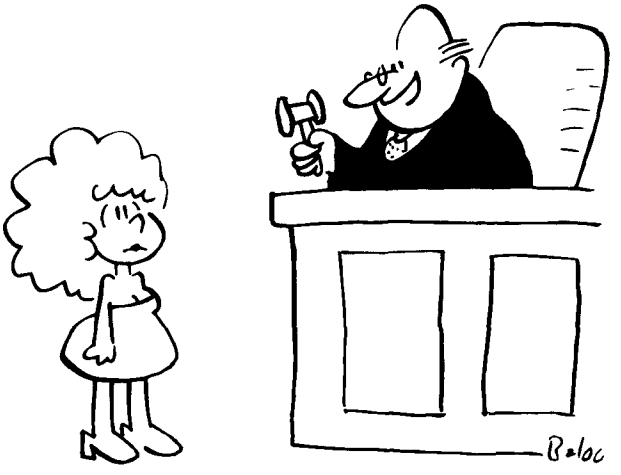
TO SUM up, then, let us admit that no system of monogamy can ever bring complete happiness to everyone. Given the variability among individuals and given the universal desire to be paired with desirable mating partners, there will always be a sizable pool of dissatisfaction under monogamy. The real question is: How far can society allow this pool to grow before these private dissensions begin to rend the social fabric? In short, what can we expect society to look like if the monogamous ideal is abandoned?

It isn't necessary to look very far. Western and Oriental cultures form a monogamous axis that spans the northern hemisphere (Orientals are far more monogamous than Westerners are), but a large part of the remaining world practices polygamy.

Polygamy is tolerated by the Koran—although it should be recognized that, like the principle of "an eye for an eye," the Islamic law that allows a man four wives is a *restriction* from an earlier practice. The Koran requires that a man support all his wives equally, which generally confines the practice to wealthy males. In most Moslem countries, polygamous marriages are restricted to the upper classes and form no more than 4 to 5 per cent of all marriages.

In sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand, polygamy is far closer to the norm. In parts of West Africa, more than 20 per cent of the marriages are polygamous. Marriage itself is rendered far more fragile by the practice of matrilinearity—tracing ancestry only through the mother's line. In West Africa, a man may sire many children (Chief M. K. O. Abiola, of Nigeria's Yoruba tribe, a self-made billionaire and chairman of ITT Nigeria, has 26 wives), but the paternal claim he can lay upon any of them is far more tenuous than it would be in Oriental or Western societies. In West Africa, women can take their children and leave a marriage at any time, making the institution extremely unstable. In these tribal societies, Christianity and Islam—which teach marital fidelity and permanent unions—are generally regarded as progressive social movements.

What qualities do we find in societies that tolerate polygamy? First, the shortage of women usually leads to the institution of the "bride price," where a young man must pay a sizable sum of money to the bride's family in order to obtain a wife. (The "dowry," in which



"This may be slightly irregular, but, by George, I'm *going to take custody of you!"*

a sum is attached to an eligible daughter to make her more attractive, is purely a product of monogamy.) This makes wives difficult to obtain for men who come from less well-to-do families.

The numerical imbalance between eligible males and females also forces older men to court younger women. Girls in their teens are often betrothed to men ten and fifteen years their senior. In some South Seas societies, infant females are betrothed to grown men. These strained couplings make marriage itself a distant and unrewarding relationship, far different from the "peer marriages" of Western and Oriental cultures.

Finally, polygamy tends to produce a high level of male violence. Because low-status males are not assured any reasonable chance of mating by the social contract, they are essentially impossible to incorporate into the larger work of society. Instead, they form themselves into violent gangs or become the foot soldiers of extremist political groups. In Pakistan, the recent news has been that the country is being overrun by these violent gangs, which have become the competing "parties"

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in the country's turbulent political system. The head of one of these factions was recently accused of raping dozens of airline stewardesses.

Yet even where polygamy is openly sanctioned, child-rearing is always built around the formation of husband-and-wife households—even if these households may contain several wives. Only among the American underclass has polygamy degenerated into a purely polymorphous variety, where courtship is forgone and family formation has become a virtually forgotten ritual.

In a recent issue of *The Public Interest*, Elijah Anderson, professor of social science at the University of Pennsylvania, described an on-going acquaintance with a 21-year-old black youth whom he called "John Turner." Anderson described the social milieu of Turner's neighborhood as follows:

> [In] Philadelphia, . . the young men of many individual streets organize informally bounded areas into territories. They then guard the territories, defending them against the intrusions and whims of outsiders . . .
>
> Local male groups claim responsibility over the women in the area, especially if they are young. These women are seen as their possessions, at times to be argued over and even fought over. When a young man from outside the neighborhood attempts to "go with" or date a young woman from the neighborhood, he must usually answer to the boys' group, negotiating for their permission first . . .
>
> At twenty-one years of age, John was the father of four children out of wedlock. He had two sons who were born a few months apart by different women, one daughter by the mother of one of the sons, and another son by a third woman.

This mating pattern is not uncommon in nature. It has recently been observed in dolphins and of course bears a strong resemblance to the structure of some primate tribes. Yet what works for these species is no longer plausible for human beings. Once again, we have eaten from the tree of knowledge. We have too much intimate knowledge of the details of sexual connection and paternity to be satisfied with this vague collectivism.

Thus "John Turner" explains how his efforts to put some order into his life by creating a bond between two of his sons resulted in his being jailed for assault:

> Well, see, this girl, the girl who's the mother of my one son, Teddy. See, I drove my girlfriend's car by her house with my other son with me. I parked the car down the street from her house and everything. So I took John, Jr., up to the house to see his brother, and we talk for awhile. But when I got ready to leave, she and her girlfriend followed me to the car. I got in the car and put John in. Then she threw a brick through the window.

The unavoidable consequence of polymorphous polygamy among humans is a tangle of competing jealousies and conflicting loyalties that make ordinary life all but impossible. The central institution at the axis of human society—the nuclear family—no longer exists.

Unfortunately, while such a mating system virtually guarantees child abuse (usually involving a "boyfriend"), internal turmoil, and rampant violence, it is also extremely reproductive. While their social life has degenerated into extreme chaos, the American underclass are nonetheless reproducing faster than any other population in the world. This follows a well-known biological principle that when populations come under stress, they attempt to save themselves by reproducing faster, with sexual maturity usually accelerated to a younger age.

The culture of polygamy is also self-reinforcing and self-perpetuating. If men feel there is nothing more to fatherhood than "making babies," then women will feel free to seek the most attractive men, without making any effort to bind them to the tasks of child-rearing. As a cultural pair, the footloose male and the single mother, if not held back by the force of social convention, can easily become the predominant type. The result is a free-for-all in which human society as we know it may become very difficult, if not impossible.

Back to 'Family Values'

THIS, THEN, is the essence of "family values." Family values are basically the belief that monogamy is the most peaceful and progressive way of organizing a human society. Dislike and distaste for anything that challenges the monogamous contract—easy divorce, widespread pornography, legalized prostitution, out-of-wedlock child bearing, blatant homosexuality—are not just narrow or prudish concerns. They come from an intelligent recognition that the monogamous contract is a fragile institution that can easily unravel if dissaffections become too widespread.

What is likely to happen if we abandon these values? People will go on reproducing, you can be sure of that. But families won't be formed ("litters" might be a more appropriate term). And the human beings that are produced in these litters will not be quite the same either. If marriage is a compromise between men and women, then the breakdown of monogamy can only let loose the natural egocentrisms of both.

It is probably not too alarmist to note that societies that have been unable to establish monogamy have also been unable to create working democracies or widely distributed wealth. No society that domesticates too few men can have a stable social order. People who are incapable of monogamy are probably incapable of many other things as well.

As a basically limiting human compact, monogamous marriage is bound to produce its peculiar difficulties. As with any compromise, each individual can argue—based on present or previous deprivation, real or imagined—that he or she should not be bound by the rules.

Yet it should also be clear that, beyond the personal dissatisfactions we all may feel, each of us also retains a permanent, private stake in sustaining a system that creates a peaceful social order and offers to everyone a reasonable chance of achieving personal happiness. If monogamy makes complex demands on human beings, it also offers unique and complex rewards. □

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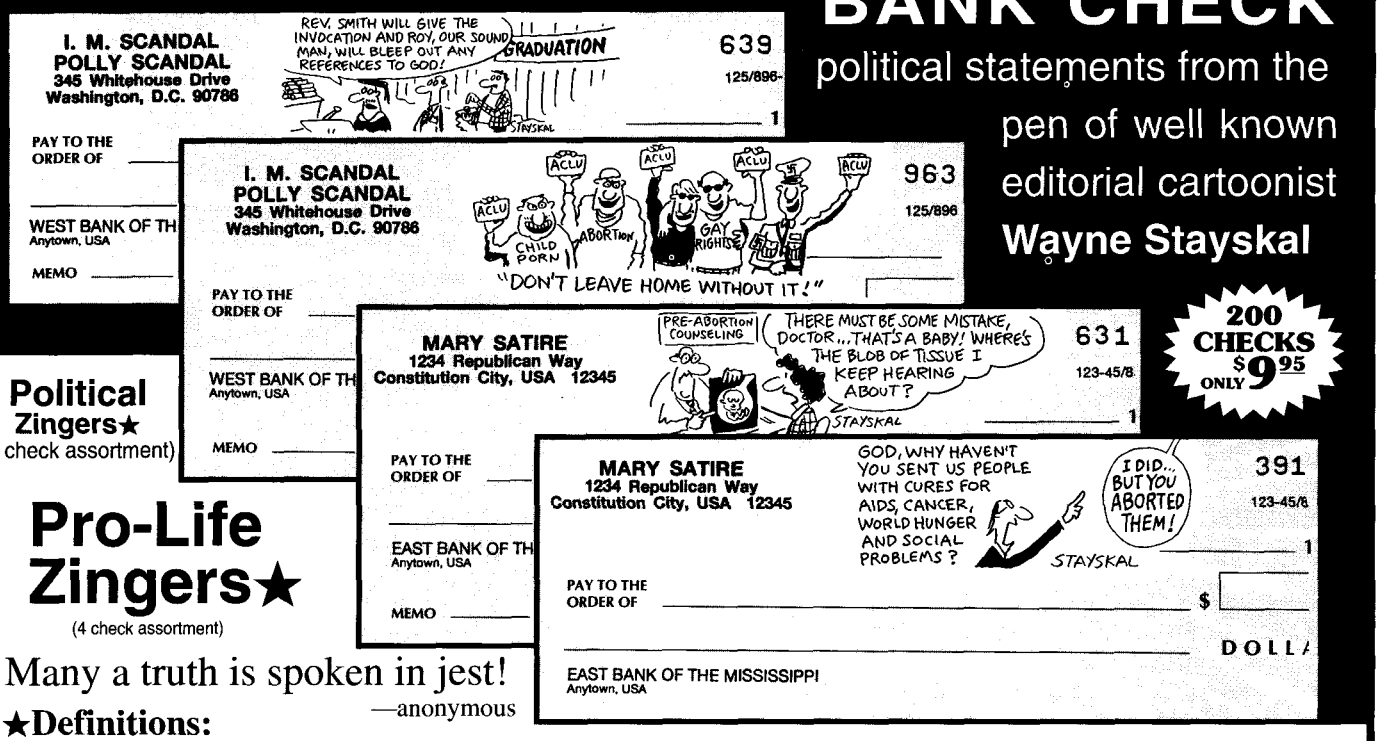

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—anonymous

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Politically Correct: the proper and approved statement or action in a given situation – *(As seen through the myopic eyes of the self righteous, over indulgent, free spending, back stabbing, old boy Pork Barrel Bureaucrats, their hangers-on, Till-Dipping fellow travellers, and wanabees)*

Politically Incorrect: opposite of politically correct

Zinger: \'ziŋ-ər\ *n* (1955) a pointed witty remark or retort (*Webster*)

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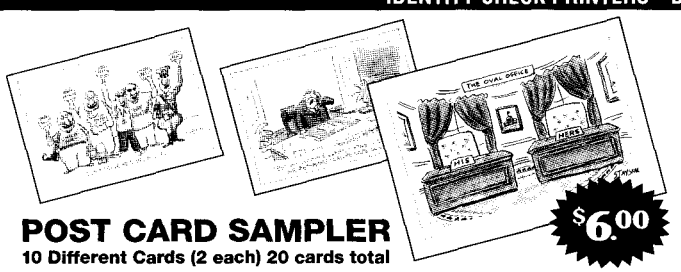

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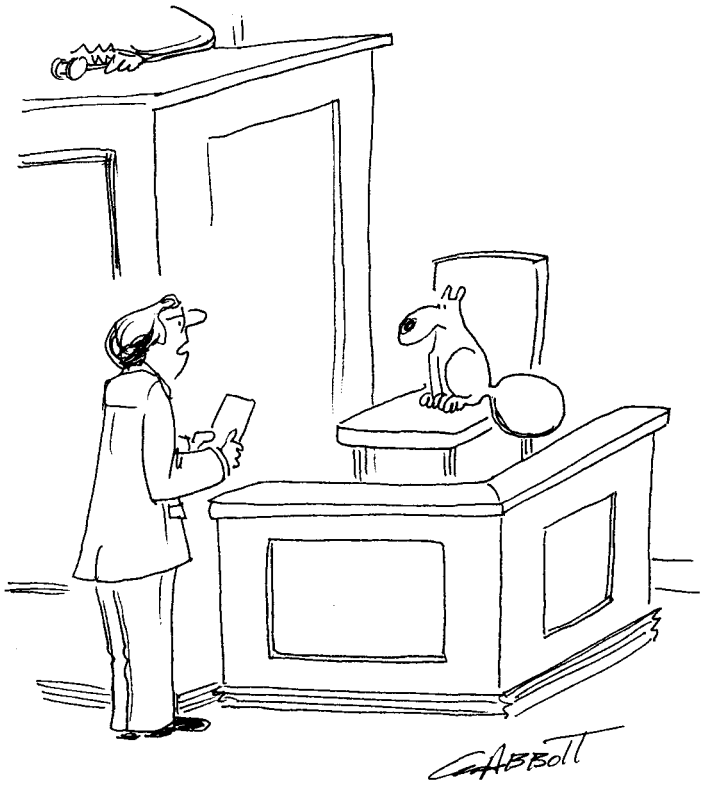

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California, Here They Come

Though wetbacks wade over like sheep
In flocks that would frighten Bo-Peep,
    The ACLU
    Prefers to pooh-pooh
Reports that they're murdering sleep.

W. H. VON DREELE

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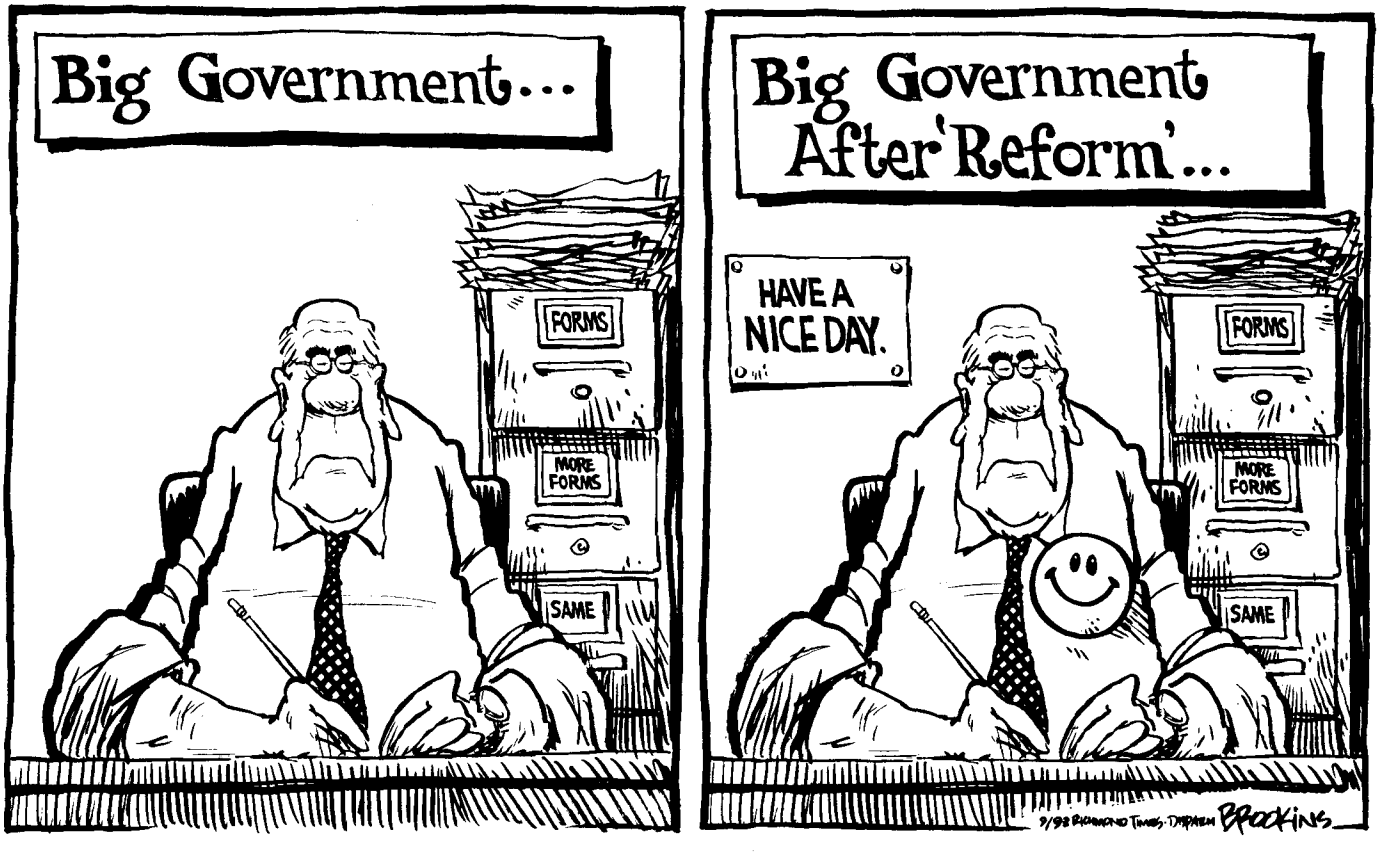

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Mr. Aspin's New World Order

C'MON, BABY— DO THE MULTILATERAL

President Clinton's Secretary of Defense is leading the Pentagon away from the stately measures of the Weinberger era into a wild and crazy global dance.

LAWRENCE T. DI RITA

BILL CLINTON came to Washington determined to end "12 years of gridlock." This message resonated with the approximatedly one in four Americans who provided Mr. Clinton his mandate. For the remaining 75 per cent of us, it remains to be shown why "gridlock" is a Bad Thing. After all—with apologies to Senator Goldwater—gridlock in the pursuit of common sense is no vice.

No gridlock during the past 12 years was more sensible than that which obtained between civilians and the military regarding overseas adventurism. The Joint Chiefs of Staff learned one very important lesson from America's failure in Vietnam: beware civilians who would launch crusades abroad.

During the Reagan–Bush years the chiefs were able to convince the secretaries of defense to pay attention to their views on this matter. As a result, a curious role reversal took place, in which hair-shirted civilians in the State Department and at the National Security Council frequently criticized the apparant pacification of the Department of Defense when it resisted their calls for "a mix of diplomacy and military force" to achieve their objectives. The breakdown of the international force that led to the tragic deaths of 241 U.S. Marines in Beirut in October 1983 only strengthened the case for defense gridlock regarding multilateral military "presences."

The prudent approach to the use of U.S. forces was codified by our longest-serving Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger. Paraphrased from his excellent memoirs, his recipe for gridlock, since named the "Weinberger Doctrine," includes these precepts:

1. Do not commit combat forces overseas unless the engagement is deemed vital to our national interest.

2. If combat troops are committed, do so wholeheartedly, with the clear intention of winning, and with clearly defined political and military objectives.

3. The commitment of combat forces abroad should be a last resort.

Fortunately, the Beirut episode was an isolated instance. More representative of the period were the liberation of Grenada, the invasion of Panama, and, of course, Operation Desert Storm. Clear and achievable objectives, an overwhelming preponderance of force, and the willingness to act independently if necessary characterized these operations, which, not coincidentally, were remarkable for the minimal loss of life on either side.

A Promise to Be Kept

ENDING gridlock (or at least the kind produced by disciplined adherence to the Weinberger Doctrine) appears to be one area in which President Clinton intends to keep his word. He has entrusted the Pentagon to a team of Great Strategic Thinkers that seems bent on seeing how quickly it can violate every one of Mr. Weinberger's principles. President Clinton seems ready to permit—indeed, encourage—the use of American military forces around the world as a snap-in, snap-out replacement for diplomacy. Worse yet, he seems prepared to use unaccountable United Nations bureaucrats—who wouldn't recognize a "vital national interest" or "clearly defined military objective" if it were printed on their inflated paychecks—to "legitimize" his use of force.

The centerpiece of Mr. Clinton's effort is his Administration's review of multilateral operations being undertaken as part of its systematic assessment of Bush Administration policies. Dubbed Presidential Decision Directive (PDD)-13, the review is considering all manner of one-worldisms, including a UN military-operations headquarters. PDD-13 would also investigate the feasibility of intelligence sharing. Imagine the People's Republic of China having access to U.S. satellite photo-imagery data and you get the idea.

Secretary of Defense Les Aspin is going to great lengths to burnish whiz-kid credentials tarnished by his lackluster first eight months in office. In

Mr. Di Rita is deputy director for foreign and defense policy at the Heritage Foundation.

ILLUSTRATION BY RANCE JONES

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his Pentagon reorganization, Mr. Aspin has created a new position, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Democracy and Peacekeeping. Reporting to this official are the newly created Deputy Assistant Secretaries for 1) Drug Policy, 2) Democracy & Human Rights, 3) Peacekeeping & Peace Enforcement, and 4) Humanitarian & Refugee Affairs.

One must give Mr. Aspin credit. With the country fixated on gay soldiers, married Marines, and lewd and lascivious sailors, he quietly reinvented government, or at least his small piece of it. It remains to be seen how effective his new organization will be, but it should suffice to note that it depends heavily on cooperation with the UN.

The UN Nightmare

ONE NEED look no further than the UN Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM) to learn how ill-suited the United Nations is to realizing the Clinton dream. What began as "humanitarian relief" soon developed into "peacekeeping" and—with the deaths of four U.S. soldiers when they drove across a land mine—"peacemaking." Four thousand American troops—hamstrung by their larger and far less competent coalition partners—have been given an open-ended assignment to end the hostilities there. The "command structure" in Mogadishu is such that national-contingent commanders seek approval from authorities in their capitals before carrying out the orders of their nominal superiors in the field. Moreover, the troops under their command are suffering from an identity crisis. Are they part of a police force or a military force? The confusion is justified. The retired U.S. admiral who is the UN representative in Somalia has issued an arrest warrant for the head of one of the factions involved in the long-standing civil war there.

But the Clinton Administration knows that the success of UNOSOM is critical to proving that its kinder, gentler Pentagon will work. This explains why Mr. Aspin has placed such a high priority on keeping the coalition from collapsing and burying the new world order in the debris. In addition to committing a very capable U.S. contingent and significant command-and-control support, the Defense Department has also agreed to provide UNOSOM with security assistance ranging from vehicles, spare parts, and fuel to "operational supplies and services, including ammunition." An examination of this agreement, being managed by the new "Democracy and Peacekeeping" organization, offers disturbing evidence of the lengths to which this Administration is prepared to go to validate its UN-first policy.

Pursuant to this agreement, the Pentagon has transferred to the United Nations weaponized armored personnel carriers (APCs), riot-control agents (including tear gas), and small-arms ammunition. Much of this equipment has been requested by the UN on behalf of the Pakistani contingent. Were the government of Pakistan to request such equipment from the U.S. directly, the Defense Department would have no choice but to say no. Because of the so-called Pressler Amendment imposed on President Reagan in 1985, "no military equipment . . . shall be sold or transferred to Pakistan" unless the President is able to certify that Pakistan does not have a nuclear capability. Since everyone believes it has such a capability, Pakistan has had to look elsewhere for security assistance.

Fully cognizant of Pressler Amendment restrictions, Pentagon officials are quick to mention two things: 1) These items are not for use within Pakistan, so it's okay; and 2) it doesn't

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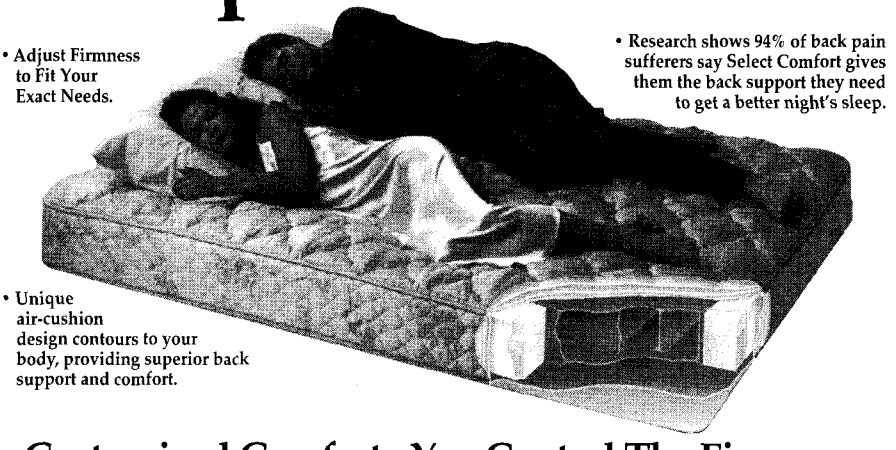
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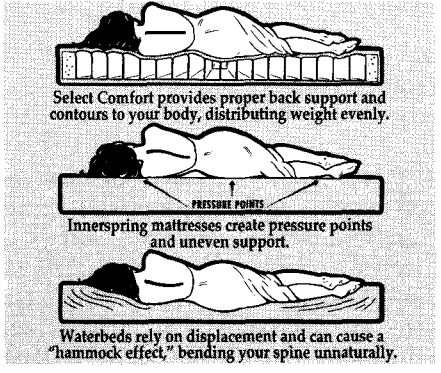
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matter anyway, because the UN actually owns the equipment. When queried about what will happen if the UNOSOM coalition is ever disbanded (sadly, a more remote possibility each day) these officials reply with child-like faith that the equipment will "go back to the UN." Presumably, there is a parking garage in midtown Manhattan housing tanks, APCs, and all manner of retrograde from similar operations in the past.

The attempted masculinization of the United Nations via an injection of American military hormones goes beyond Somalia. President Clinton has twisted arms at NATO to provide for air strikes in Bosnia to help end the siege of Sarajevo. He has deferred, though, to UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to approve the targets and order the strikes, evidently believing the latter is rather less a Secretary than a General. Will the President also ask Mr. Boutros-Ghali to travel to distant Iowa or Alabama to explain to the parents of the first American pilot downed by Serbian missiles why their son won't be coming home?

We may hope that President Clinton's message of condolence to the parents of the soldiers fallen in Somalia offered insight that he has thus far failed to share with the nation at large. It seems obvious, though, that the policy is animated by the notion that multilateral military operations are somehow more "noble" than raw expressions of national interest (an unintended but entirely logical extension of President Bush's desire to get the UN imprimatur before protecting the United States' well-recognized right to access to Middle East oil fields).

Not to be outdone, the crusaders of Capitol Hill have joined this ennobling quest. Joseph Biden has introduced Senate Joint Resolution 112, which would provide the jewel in the Secretary-General's crown: a UN standing army. For its part, the majority staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has issued a study lamenting that "[t]he French have in many ways seized the mantle of world leadership in UN peace operations." To correct this, these Democratic do-gooders would: "negotiate . . . special agreements with the UN to facilitate rapid

"Around here, when you're right, you're right—and when you're wrong, you're dead."

American assistance to peace operations; provide assistance to the UN in modernizing its peacekeeping operations; deploy U.S. combat troops under UN command."

The Administration has avoided broad public discussion of these ideas, and for good reason. The opinion of the United Nations held by most Americans is as low as that of their armed forces is high. Moreover, the Defense Department has soft-pedaled its reorganization because Secretary Aspin's Assistant Secretary-Designate for Democracy and Peacekeeping is one Morton Halperin, who has made a career of being on the wrong side of history.

Mr. Halperin was until recently the director of the Washington office of the American Civil Liberties Union, and he was a prominent defender of those who released classified national-security documents to the media. He has himself established a paper trail (uncovered by Frank Gaffney, the director of the Center for Security Policy) that puts him far to the left of the "misunderstood civil librtarian" he claims to be. For example, as a leading advocate of a nuclear-weapons freeze during the Cold War, he wrote in *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* in March 1983: "If the freeze is seen to be losing support in Congress, then *no arms control will be possible under this Administration.*" (Emphasis added.) In one of history's more satisfying ironies, that article went to press about the time President Reagan announced SDI, the catalyst for the series of arms-control agreements he began signing four years later with the Soviets.

The nomination hearings for Mr. Halperin will begin soon. Those hearings should develop into a referendum on the Administration's decision to hand over the keys of the American military machine to the UN. If the debate is properly crafted, defeating Mr. Halperin will go a long way toward defeating the policy. Should he be confirmed—General Shalikashvili, the Secretary-General would like to see you. □

Recession or Recovery?

ONE NATION, TWO ECONOMIES

The media are accurately reporting the economy they see—which isn't that of most of the country.

IRWIN M. STELZER

IT'S NO wonder that analysts are having difficulty forecasting the future course of the American economy. For that huge, sprawling $6-trillion entity has become bifurcated. On the one hand, we have a few slumping states such as New York, New Jersey, and California. Then, there is the rest of the country.

This is obscured by most of the headline statistics. For example, when

Mr. Stelzer is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

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"Young America's Foundation is a refuge for students seeking an alternative to the 'politically correct' environment enforced on many campuses."

Ronald Reagan

Libertas is the Foundation's general newsletter published six times yearly. It reports on Foundation events, noting students who have been successful conducting campus programs and battling political correctness.

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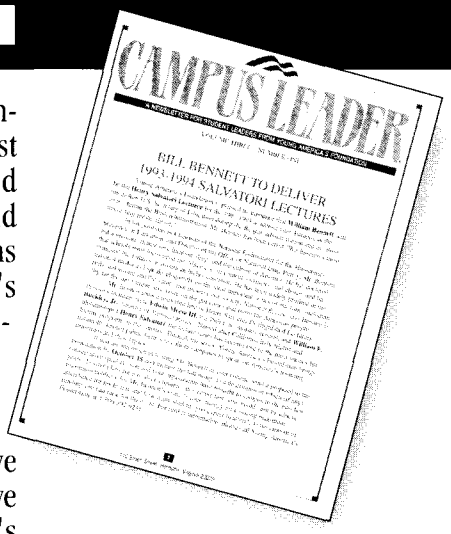
Now more than ever conservative students must be prepared to defend their beliefs. Knowledge and information are key weapons in this battle, whether it's understanding how to conduct a conservative speakers program, ward off "politically correct" administrators, or run an alternative publication. For twenty-five years Young America's Foundation has helped students with speakers, publications, training and advice. Now we introduce the "Campus Activist Package," a selection of Foundation publications that can give you the know-how and information to promote your ideas on campus.



Campus Leader is the Foundation's monthly newsletter for student contacts. It contains information on resources available from the Foundation, including speakers, books, and posters. Each issue includes a full-size poster. These posters have decorated thousands of dorm rooms on campuses all over the U. S.

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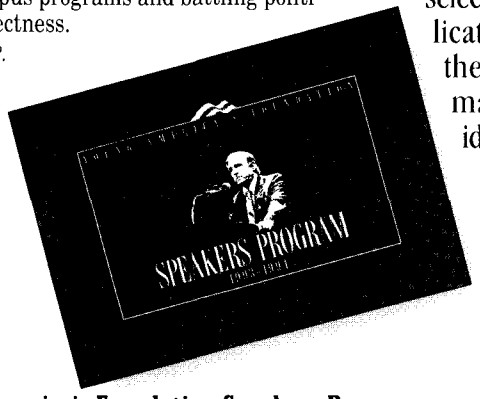

Young America's Foundation Speakers Program contains information on the various speakers offered through the Foundation, including William F. Buckley, Oliver North, Russell Kirk, Bay Buchanan, William Bennett, Dinesh D'Souza, Phyllis Schlafly, Walter Williams, and many more. In recent years these speakers have addressed thousands of students, bringing balance to hundreds of campuses all over the U. S.

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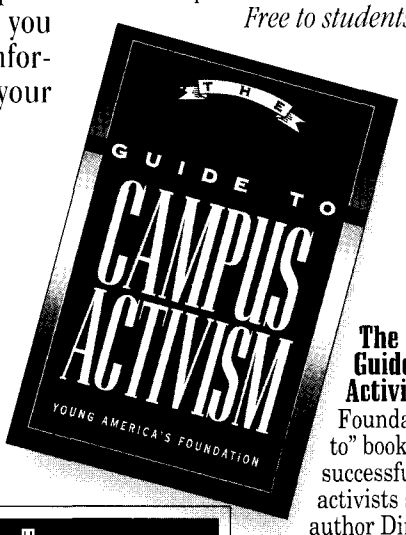

The Conservative Guide to Campus Activism is the Foundation's "how-to" book written by successful campus activists such as author Dinesh D'Souza, Congressman Dana Rohrabacher and Foundation President Ron Robinson. Includes chapters on how to start a conservative newspaper, conducting speaking events, fundraising, how to defend your legal rights on campus, and more.

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the press reported "Housing Starts Fall by 2.7%," few noticed a statement buried at the bottom of one of the stories. Michael Carliner, economist at the National Association of Home Builders, said, "If we were to take California out, this would look like a very good housing year." So let's look beyond the national figures.

The economies of the Southeastern states, led by the Carolinas, are growing at a rate of about 4 per cent, owing to foreign investment in manufacturing facilities. One example: Daimler Benz's truck operation in North Carolina is running full blast, and the company will be putting a new plant there to turn out made-in-America Mercedes Benzes. Thanks to such ventures, unemployment in the Southeast is well below the national average. Indeed, Charlotte's First Union Corporation reports that the Southeast has added 23,000 *factory* jobs in the past two years—quite a feat given the ills that afflict this country's manufacturing sector. In turn, these increased opportunities fuel the area's construction industries and buoy consumer spending.

"George Walker is sorry to hear his bankruptcy caused your bankruptcy, sir, but was comforted to know that there are others suffering the same dire circumstances as himself."

The Rocky Mountain area and the Southwest also seem well on the way to recovery. A Denver limousine driver told me that his business, which comes mostly from corporations, is up 20 per cent over last year. Local hotels are fully booked with businessmen, conventioneers, and tourists. Employment is up in every sector except for manufacturing (not a big factor in the Denver area), and Colorado's unemployment rate of 5.4 per cent is well below the 6.8 per cent national average. The Conference Board's new regional performance index shows that Colorado and its neighbors—Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, and Nevada—have grown by 8.1 per cent since the recession's trough in March of 1991. Little wonder that *Time*'s post–Labor Day cover blared "Boom Time in the Rockies."

It's a short flight from cool Denver to white-hot Phoenix. The temperatures may be different—63°F. in Denver, 108°F. in Phoenix—but the economic picture is the same. One local expert tells me that Phoenix, long noted for its empty office blocks, now faces a shortage of first-class office space. The residential market is also enjoying a near-boom. As California businesses flee high taxes and regulatory red tape for the more welcoming climate of Arizona, their workers follow. Permits to build single-family homes in Arizona are on course to reach the highest level since the peak of the last boom in 1986. A Hanson PLC subsidiary, Watt Hancock builders, has had to raise prices at its new development to keep sales to the 45-homes-per-week level that its builder can deliver.

Hotels, usually almost empty in the summer, are doing a brisk business. The ritzy Phoenician, built by now-jailed banker Charles Keating, has been chalking up a 70 per cent occupancy rate, a tribute to its new management and to the resurgence of business and tourist activity in Arizona. In short, a recovery bordering on major expansion is under way.

From Joy to Gloom

THE BUOYANT confidence in towns such as Phoenix and Denver is in marked contrast to the gloom that overwhelms Washington, Los Angeles, and New York. Washington, of course, is a special case, a one-industry town whose industry is government. Or, more precisely, politics. The mood fluctuates more with the polls than with the unemployment rate, which, for the people who matter, is kept close to zero by the gargantuan appetite of the federal bureaucracy, a situation not likely to change even after the Vice President reinvents government. With the President's popularity rating at a historically low level, the Democrats who make up the majority of Washington's residents have a lot less spring in their steps than do the ordinary folk of the nation's hinterland.

Californians are even glummer, as Arizona's gain is their loss. Their state now has an unemployment rate of 9.8 per cent, 50 per cent above the national average. Some 26.7 per cent of the office space in Los Angeles stands vacant, compared to an 18 per cent average in the nation's 53 largest cities. President Clinton's unwinding of the defense industry has thrown tens of thousands onto the dole. But America has survived such transitions from a defense-based to a peacetime economy before. A more lasting phenomenon is the exodus of businesses from the state. Over 1,000 firms providing 168,000 mostly high-paying, high-technology jobs have fled since 1980. But California, where politics are dominated by the fully employed, or at least more than fully compensated, left-liberal denizens of Hollywood and Beverly Hills, seems reluctant to roll back its costly welfare state.

Equally liberal New York also finds itself lagging behind the national recovery. To understand why, look at New York City. The city government employs 14 per cent of all working New Yorkers (the national average for city governments is 10 per cent). And New York leads the nation in the number of able-bodied people who are just not in the work force—neither employed nor looking for work. Even in

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strife-torn Los Angeles, 66 per cent of all men have jobs or are actively seeking them. So, too, in the murder capital of America, Washington, D.C. But in New York City only 56 per cent of men are at work or job hunting. Partly as a result, 13.3 per cent of the city's population receives public assistance. The national average: 5.3 per cent.

The result of this bloated city government and huge welfare burden is an equally huge tax burden for those who do work. City taxes come to more than $2,000 per person per year, the highest rate in the entire nation.

Add to this the body-blow the city received from the President's new budget. New York City's high earners are most severely affected by the jump in the top tax rate from 31 per cent to about 40 per cent because the city's high cost of living leaves them with less discretionary income than equally high earners in other states. Its restaurant industry is bound to suffer from new, more stringent rules concerning the tax treatment of business entertainment expenses, and its numerous small businesses will soon be hit with a disproportionate share of the taxes the President will propose to fund his health-care plan. Little wonder that foreign investors prefer, say, North Carolina to New York, and that Japanese investors now wish they had stayed away from both the Empire State and the Golden State.

Fortunately for scare-mongering headline writers, and unfortunately for those trying to understand the American economy, gloomy Washington and depressed New York and Los Angeles are the media capitals of America. The national press comes to Phoenix only when the city's basketball team challenges for the NBA championship, and sets foot in Denver only when the Pope visits. No surprise that it hooted when George Bush correctly said the recession was over last fall, and that it now underestimates the strength of the recovery.

And, given their liberal bias, it is even less surprising that the media fail to relate the difference between the stagnant economies of regulation-happy California and tax-mad New York, on the one hand, and the growing economies of the relatively regulation- and tax-free Rocky Mountain states on the other, to the fact that that government is best which regulates and taxes least. □

Our Nomenklatura and Theirs

DAWN OF AN OLD ORDER

The former Communist world isn't so former, thanks partly to the Jim Bakers of the world.

MARK ALMOND

REMEMBER the days when the United States supported Third World regimes whose leaders unctuously proclaimed the ideals of Western democracy while plundering their countries and brutalizing their people? With the end of the Cold War, the sight of U.S. Presidents shaking hands with glorified torturers was supposed to be a thing of the past. The Great Game against the West's Soviet rival had justified supporting our "sons of bitches" against theirs. In the new dawn, the age of Machiavellian compromise was supposed to have passed as the United States stepped forward as the patron of the democracies emerging from the ruins of Communism.

Now the fairy-tale bloodless end of Communism is turning sour. Across the old Soviet Union, all but one (Estonia) of the independent republics has an ex-Communist as its president. A quiet restoration of the old elite has been going on despite all the chatter about democracy and the transition to a free market. That is bad enough for the long-term prospects for democracy or capitalism, but worse is that, in each struggle for power between local anti-Communists and Moscow's man, Americans and Western Europe have sided with the Party hack.

What has recently happened down in the Caucasus graphically encapsulates the problem of Western backing for the old order. It took the murder of a U.S. diplomat, Fred Woodruff, on a nondescript stretch of the great Trans-Caucasus Military Highway to bring to public view how deeply involved America had become with the gangland world of modern Georgia. By all accounts, Fred Woodruff was a model CIA man: discreet, brave, and hard-working, personally incorruptible but ready to put his scruples aside for America's sake.

The tragedy of Fred Woodruff is that he died on a mission to help a regime thoroughly corroded by graft, violence, and drug-pushing. Even though the mafiosi who strut the streets of the capital, Tbilisi, demanding bribes to let people pass their roadblocks and controlling the supply of everything from bread to heroin, are open about their support for the government, that same government also enjoys the unqualified support of the U.S. and Germany in particular. The bodyguard of Georgia's president is being trained at U.S. expense by U.S. experts. Delta Force has an elite unit in Georgia to help prop up the regime, which came to power in a violent coup at Christmastime, 1991. CIA, FBI, and DEA agents are a dime a dozen in Tbilisi's luxury hard-currency hotel, the Metechi Palace. The hotel, which overlooks the main prison for political prisoners, is haunted by the bosses of the local hoods—but the Americans are giving them the secrets of their expertise, not trying to bring them to book or frustrate their rackets.

Why So Blind?

THE WAR on drugs and organized crime is supposed to be America's great post–Cold War crusade, yet down in the Caucasus, the crusaders seem to have confused the Saracens for the Christians. Why has America's elite been so blind? The answer can be summed up in the name of one man: Eduard Shevardnadze.

Described by the British *Observer* as

Mr. Almond is a lecturer in modern European history at Oriel College, Oxford.

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the nearest thing to a saint in the modern world, Shevardnadze has been canonized by the great and good across the West because of his role in the ending of the Cold War. In the warm afterglow of the fall of the Berlin Wall, who wanted to remember his long years as Party and KGB boss in Georgia? Here for once was a leopard who had changed his spots.

If the end of East–West tension transformed Shevardnadze's image, then the collapse of the Soviet Union put him in reality back to his career's beginnings in his native Georgia. After all, as a Georgian he would have found it difficult to claim a role at the top in the new Russia. So the old leopard changed his spots back again and headed south.

Unfortunately, in the meantime the Georgians had elected as their president an old thorn in Shevardnadze's flesh from his time as First Secretary after 1972. Zviad Gamsakhurdia was everything that Shevardnadze was not: instead of the weepy-eyed honey-toned prophet of new thinking, Gamsakhurdia was an old-fashioned anti-Communist who had done time under Shevardnadze for promoting Georgian nationalism.

Bush as Metternich

TO PROPERLY brought up folk like George Bush and James Baker, anti-Communism even in the backwoods of the Soviet Union was an appalling bit of redneckery. Combined with nationalism it was a curse to their vision of fruitful cooperation with a reformed Soviet Union. If President Bush had a foreign-policy doctrine, it was that countries should be neither destroyed nor created. Bush will come to be seen as a post-modern Metternich, rightly unwilling to let Saddam swallow up the Al-Sabahs' Kuwait, but equally dead set against letting the people of Lithuania, say, achieve their independence from Moscow.

People throughout the old Soviet Union remember Bush's infamous attack on "suicidal nationalism" in Kiev in 1991 just three weeks before the anti-Gorbachev coup. They also recall how on his farewell visit to the Kremlin, he readily agreed to issue a joint communiqué with Boris Yeltsin denouncing the "nationalist" policies of the anti-Communist President of Azerbaijan, Abulfez Elchibey, since toppled by an armed *Putsch*. But it has been the post-Soviet restoration of the Georgian *nomenklatura* with Western approval which is the most instructive case.

Although Gamsakhurdia won 87 per cent of the vote in a five-way election in May 1991, within weeks he was denounced as a dictator. The whole apparatus of disinformation went into overtime, persuading Western journalists (who anyway tended to favor Shevardnadze's social-democratic and humanist rhetoric) that Gamsakhurdia was an evil, nationalist tyrant.

As the Soviet Union fell apart in December 1991, Gamsakhurdia's opponents came out in force with tanks and artillery and deposed him. At this stage they were led by two paramilitarists with unsavory pasts. Tengis Kitovani led the "National Guard" and Jaba Ioseliani controlled a militia called the Mkhedrioni (the "horsemen"), but despite their grand names both these groups were heavily armed racketeers. Ioseliani had a criminal record for violent crime under the Soviet system which even he barely bothered to dignify as "dissidence."

After a decent interval, Shevardnadze came back to his native land and assumed the presidency in March 1992. At the time Western media and diplomats assured us that he would quickly put the country back on its feet after its ruination under Gamsakhurdia. But the curfew, the disappearances, and the gunfire which haunted Tbilisi's streets went on.

The West sent its emissaries to congratulate the hero of *glasnost* on his new job, but many Georgians turned out to demonstrate, hoping that champions of democracy like Hans-Dietrich Genscher and James Baker would hear their complaints and investigate where the "disappeared" supporters of Gamsakhurdia had gone. Instead Baker let himself be shown on television smiling warmly and shaking Ioseliani's hand. Meanwhile Ioseliani's men fired at the crowd that was hoping to see Baker. Bullets afterward became "Bakers" in local parlance, while German-shepherd dogs were nicknamed in Genscher's honor after they were used by the Mkhedrioni to disperse a crowd of women trying to see him.

Ordinary Georgians, seeing their country ransacked by their new rulers, witnessing the collapse of its health services while Ioseliani's men stole drugs from their hospitals, were bewildered by the Western support for a government which reduced their country to the lowest level of Soviet-type poverty combined with a Latin American–style death-squad culture. But even resident diplomats had eyes only for Shevardnadze, whose sanctity increased when he let himself be baptized under the name of Georgia's own patron saint, George. Of course in the 1930s another Georgian wove a magical tapestry before the eyes of visitors to the Soviet Union which blinded them to its harsh reality. At least Stalin kept order, whereas in Shevardnadze's Georgia anyone can hear the gunfire at night or see the addicts on the streets or even among the gallant Mkhedrioni.

Passing the Dim Torch

BILL CLINTON has inherited the Bush Doctrine. It was his CIA chief, James Woolsey, who went from cosy chats with KGB boss Yevgeny Primakov in Moscow, to stand honor guard with Shevardnadze over Fred Woodruff's coffin. There is little hope of change from this Administration.

When Shevardnadze had himself "elected" unopposed as president last October, the National Democratic Institute sent a delegation to observe the elections, headed by Brian Attwood, now a senior State Department official. Housed in the $270-a-night Metechi Palace, the NDI delegation was insulated by muzak and fountains from the realities of life outside. Other hotels offered only food shortages and squalid violence (including Mkhedrioni shooting for fun into the streets from upper stories).

At a press conference, Shevardnadze agreed to let the observers visit the prison to talk with individuals he admitted had been maltreated. None of the NDI delegation took the chance to visit the prison.

To be fair to Attwood, who joked on our flight out of Georgia about my request to see detainees, he did not take the pompous stance of the German chargé d'affaires, Hans-Peter Nielsen, who angrily denounced the request to see political prisoners as an attempt to get the just-elected Shevardnadze "to

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interfere in the separation of powers"! In fact, Shevardnadze himself agreed to let observers meet a prisoner, Zaza Tsiklauri, who was at the center of a scandal. Shevardnadze's own security minister had resigned over the case with the chilling confession that even he could not stop torture by Ioseliani's men.

British observers went to the central prison, but someone forgot to remind Tsiklauri that he had been tortured, which was odd because everyone else knew it, from Shevardnadze to the procurator investigating the case, who whispered, "I don't think he got those injuries in an accident." But Tsiklauri insisted, zombie-like, that his broken limbs, burns, and scaldings were the result of a car crash "attempting to escape." It takes quite special treatment to reduce a man to denying what even his torturers confess.

Relatives of prisoners like Tsiklauri have asked Western embassies to take up their cases, but to no avail. The alleged murderer of Fred Woodruff too faces trial without jury or foreign observers.

Among the Apparatchiks

DESPITE his Western backing, the outlook for Shevardnadze is far from rosy. His power base is the old Soviet elite in Georgia backed up by the renamed KGB. If he had any popular support last October, it must have dwindled fast. Talking to Georgians then, there was some hope that even if he had installed himself in power by force his rich friends in the West would have given generously to stabilize the situation. In fact, U.S. and EC aid, including more than 100,000 tons of grain, have flooded into Georgia, but not into the bellies of ordinary people. When it comes to skimming the cream, or rather scooping the whole bowl, nobody can beat the old *apparatchiks*.

Unfortunately for Shevardnadze, the hard men who brought him back to power are destroying the basis for any stable society with their racketeering. He faces a dangerous choice. He can throw his lot in with them and risk losing his halo in the West, or he can try to use the old KGB to purge them. Either way, more bloodshed is only too likely.

With the help of U.S. security agencies, Shevardnadze seems to have opted for the latter course. That may be why Fred Woodruff was killed—to warn the CIA off interfering with local politics. In a Night of the Long Knives against the local mafias, Shevardnadze and the KGB may seem the better option, but only because those groups got together in the first place to strangle any chance for democracy in Georgia.

In any case, the expensive U.S. and EC aid which has gone to prop up Shevardnadze is typical of the instinctive alliance between the Western establishment and the *nomenklatura* across the Soviet bloc. This new reality is now creating something which seventy years of Communist propaganda could not instill into the population—genuine anti-Americanism. In the old days all the scorn and bile poured on the American model only made it more attractive to people living under Communism. But now the sight of a James Baker shaking hands with a Jaba Ioseliani, or of a CIA chief hand-in-glove with the successor of Feliks Dzerzhinsky, makes much blood boil. This phenomenon can be seen in everyday economic cooperation, too, where Western banks and aid agencies like Jacques Attali's spendthrift European Bank for Reconstruction and Development put their cash behind the *nomenklatura*'s privatization of state assets into their own hands. People joke that the EBRD should be called the "Bank for the Reconstruction of the Nomenklatura."

Orwell satirized the cynical pact between Stalin and Hitler at the end of *Animal Farm* when the pigs and humans celebrate their newly made alliance at the expense of the other animals, but that satire could just as easily conjure up the new-found blood-brotherhood between our elite and its post-Soviet counterpart, who can be seen spending a convivial evening in any dollar-bar east of the Elbe at somebody else's expense. The tragedy of Fred Woodruff is that he was sent abroad to die for his country and ended up dying for its natural enemies, all in the line of duty. In the 1980s an Oliver Stone would have made a film out of Fred Woodruff's fate, but he would have got the heroes and villains mixed up. Perhaps he still would, but so unfortunately has Washington. □

"Absolutely Heavenly"

Nika Hazleton, *NATIONAL REVIEW*, Jan 22, 1990
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The Decline of American Journalism (Cont'd)

A Credibility Test

The article in your June 21 issue, "It Didn't Start with *Dateline NBC*," by Walter Olson, claims that there is a longstanding pattern of deception on the part of the TV networks involved in stories related to vehicle testing.

In making his charges, Mr. Olson points to a number of instances of shows on each of the networks dating back to the 1970s in which he claims dishonest and inappropriate testing has been used to bolster a particular story. Two of the instances cited by Mr. Olson to make his case—the stories on CJ-5 rollovers and multi-piece rim separations, which appeared on CBS's *60 Minutes*—featured tests organized by and funded by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. In both cases, Mr. Olson has his facts wrong.

The Institute, through its contractor Dynamic Sciences Incorporated of Phoenix, Arizona, conducted a large number of vehicle-handling tests with the Jeep CJ-5 utilizing two maneuvers—a J-turn, which is a sharp turn to the right, and an obstacle-avoidance maneuver, in which a vehicle steers around an obstacle and returns to its original travel lane. These tests were conducted over a range of speeds and were designed to explore the limits of the vehicle's handling. The vast majority of the tests were conducted with an instrumentation package mounted in the luggage area of the CJ-5 test vehicles to obtain measurements such as peak lateral accelerations, roll angles, and yaw rates. When this instrumentation was on the CJ-5, there was never any intention to run the vehicle at or beyond the limits of its performance because, if the vehicle had rolled over, it would have damaged and possibly destroyed a very expensive piece of equipment. This is why several hundred tests were conducted without rollover, starting at lower speeds, which were gradually increased following normal engineering and testing protocols. A carefully documented record was maintained of all of the tests. The fact that there were only eight rollovers out of several hundred runs would be relevant only if the purpose of the program had been to obtain filmed footage of CJ-5 rollovers; it wasn't! The purpose was to obtain information on the handling characteristics of the Jeep CJ-5 and to explore whether the vehicle would roll over, instead of skidding as a passenger car would, when its performance limits were exceeded.

The Olson article repeats a false claim first made by American Motors that the vehicles skidded repeatedly during these several hundred runs and therefore the tires were degraded. The facts are that these vehicles did not skid repeatedly; they simply were made to perform routine J-turn and obstacle-avoidance maneuvers *without* skidding. Again contrary to the claim in the article, during the obstacle-avoidance maneuver there was no "gunning the accelerator"; the vehicle was driven at a constant speed as it was steered around an obstacle, which is a common vehicle-handling maneuver.

Mr. Olson also has the facts wrong concerning the maximum steering-wheel turning rates used in the testing. Except for a small number of tests, the rates were all below 1,000 degrees per second, which earlier General Motors research had shown to be achievable by non-expert drivers. In the actual rollovers, one steering-wheel rate was 1,562 degrees per second, and the others were well below 1,000 degrees per second.

Mr. Olson repeatedly focuses on a red herring related to his claim that "at the request of Insurance Institute personnel" the testing organization "had taken the step of hanging weights in the vehicle's corners—inside the body, where they were not apparent to the camera." That statement imputes sinister motives, whereas the truth is that the weights were substituted to keep the test vehicle's weight constant for test runs conducted without the instrumentation package. This is not sinister but simply good testing procedure! The weights were not deliberately hidden but simply attached to the cargo area of the vehicle. Furthermore, these weights had little or no influence on the vehicle's stability; if they had, the Institute would have been the first to point it out.

After these test results were released, American Motors repeatedly made claims that the test vehicles were altered to increase the chances of a rollover. These claims are *false*, but even though it knew better, American Motors continued to make them. Mr. Olson has swallowed these false claims. I was personally responsible for this particular test program and at no time was any modification or change made to a test vehicle with the objective of increasing the likelihood of rollover. Any claims to the contrary are false!

Mr. Olson is so intent on proving his premise that deception is involved in all of these programs that he proceeds in the next instance to ignore materials sent to him concerning filmed demonstration tests of what can happen when a multi-piece wheel explosively separates. That footage prepared by the Institute was shown on *60 Minutes* in March 1981. However, as Mr. Olson knows, the purpose of that footage was to *demonstrate* the violence of a multi-piece wheel separation during inflation. It was first released by the Institute in October 1978, and the press statement by the president of the Institute at that time, William Haddon Jr., clearly stated, "Since for our tests we could not depend on real-world conditions to produce explosions (or, for that matter, to prevent explosions) in the multi-piece wheels with which we were working, we deliberately modified the wheels so as to ensure that they would predictably explode under the pressure of tire inflation." Apparently unknown to Mr. Olson is the fact that Goodyear, a manufacturer of multi-piece wheels, used *exactly* the same procedure to produce a separation in a training film on the hazards of multi-piece wheels. Yet Mr. Olson, knowing that the Institute clearly explained the nature of the demonstration in 1978, suggests that this knowledge was forced out "under questioning in a later deposition." In deciding to ignore the prominent disclosure by the Institute, Mr. Olson is guilty of the same charges he has leveled against the networks—failure to disclose.

While we would agree with Mr. Olson that in many instances the networks have over-relied on "experts" who serve the plaintiffs' bar and that there are more examples of inappropriate testing than just the *Dateline NBC* example, Mr.

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Olson has fallen into the reverse situation of over-relying on unsubstantiated allegations produced by the manufacturers of products that have safety problems. Mr. Olson states, "Small Jeeps do roll over more readily than other vehicles, but they seldom do so under ordinary road situations." I am not sure what Mr. Olson means exactly by ordinary road situations, but the evidence is overwhelming that the Jeep CJ-5 has a dangerous propensity to roll over, including in many situations that are encountered in normal driving. *The vehicle had a fatality rate comparable to that of motorcycles.* The *60 Minutes* segment exposing this unreasonable hazard was a fair and accurate portrayal of a problem that has resulted in more than a thousand unnecessary deaths.

Mr. Olson has done a disservice to reputable testing and demonstration programs that fairly and honestly documented serious safety problems with the Jeep CJ-5 and multi-piece wheels. Yes, there are examples of dishonest and/or inappropriate tests shown in many television exposés; there are also examples of dishonest responses by manufacturers to charges leveled against their products. In his zeal to prove his case, Mr. Olson has taken some of these dishonest responses hook, line, and sinker. In the future we hope he is less one-sided in his approach.

Brian O'Neill
President
Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
Arlington, Va.

It is an irony that in "It Didn't Start with *Dateline NBC*," Walter Olson epitomizes the very "decline of American journalism" that your special issue decries. Here is why:

1) Mr. Olson is no "journalist," although he has identified himself as one in newspaper articles and contacts with unsuspecting interview subjects. He works as a salaried employee of the Manhattan Institute, a special-interest organization funded by corporate dollars and following a corporate line of attack against the protections afforded by the civil-justice system to victims of corporate abuse. Nowhere is that organization's governance or mission identified in his article or in the magazine. Sound journalism requires honesty and disclosure, which are uncomfortable conditions for corporations hiding unsafe products such as the General Motors fire-prone pickup trucks which Mr. Olson attempts—and fails—to exculpate.

2) A basic tenet of real journalism is that the reporter must interview people before writing about them. Mr. Olson's article refers extensively to me and organizations with which I have worked—but he never spoke to me in preparing the article. That, along with his cloaked role, may help to explain why the article is so riddled with errors.

3) Mr. Olson attempts to show that there is a long history of media "rigging" of tests connected with investigative coverage of product defects. He cites a number of projects, including explosive truck-wheel separations and Jeep rollovers in which I have been involved, and one—the *Dateline* pickup-truck impact tests—in which I was not involved. He describes every one of them incorrectly. The tests were not done to determine whether a product defect existed, as Olson suggests; in each case the defective nature of the product had been clearly, tragically established in the real world, at terrible cost to injury victims. The testing was simply to demonstrate the catastrophic effect of the defect on human beings. Duplicating the defect was not "rigging." On the contrary, it was good and necessary science and engineering.

What Mr. Olson calls "rigging" is absolutely top-notch demonstrative science in which the known conditions of an aberrant situation are re-created so that their hazardous impact can be seen and further understood. To Mr. Olson, a scientist injecting a rat with a cancer cell to study the outcome would be impermissibly "rigging" the rat by changing it, since the rat did not acquire the cancer cell under uncontrolled natural conditions.

4) Mr. Olson neglects to disclose that what he and GM call "rigging" is routinely done by auto-industry, government, and insurance researchers. In fact, GM participated in the industry's release just months ago of a video "news story" showing fire raging in the trunk of a car equipped with an onboard fuel-vapor recovery system—a system opposed by GM and other car companies. Nowhere did the video disclose to news editors and viewers that the test was "rigged," by Mr. Olson's definition, since it used an ignition source triggered by the testers. And as early as 1971, GM told federal safety regulators it was "rigging" fuel-system tests so that fire would be generated under certain conditions.

Of course researchers introduce ignition sources into fuel-tank crash tests if the purpose is to demonstrate what happens when fires break out after fuel systems fail in crashes, even though Mr. Olson may not want to know why. Fire occurs in "only" 10 to 15 per cent of all fuel-system impact ruptures in the real world because the presence of a spark in a crash is random and therefore difficult to either predict or control. So fuel tank ruptures don't always lead to harmful fires—but when they do, the injuries are horrendous. The defective GM pickups have caused "only" about three hundred deaths to date, and will cause "only" another two hundred if not recalled and repaired. Insignificant numbers? Not to the victims and their survivors, and not to the health-care system, which must bear the costs.

5) As for Mr. Olson's attempts to describe the nature of tests demonstrating the hazards of Jeep CJ rollovers, truck-wheel-separation explosions, and other such events, they are so riddled with factual errors and baseless "conclusions" that it would take pages of corrections to straighten them out. Which is no wonder, since Mr. Olson clearly understands neither the technical aspects of the tests nor their purpose. What he does understand is that the manufacturers of such defective products—the Manhattan Institute's supporters—do not want the public learning about them.

6) Mr. Olson baselessly attacks me and the organization for which I work, the Institute for Injury Reduction, for providing "made-to-order footage on auto safety to broadcast news departments." In fact, IIR and its members—attorneys who represent people injured by unsafe products and are highly knowledgeable about product hazards—have never provided "made to order" footage for anyone. Entirely on its own initiative, IIR frequently carries out demonstration testing of a wide range of products. These have included hazardous toys, collapsing car-seat backs, deficient safety belts, unsafe child restraints, and others.

All of these have been made known to the public, over tremendous manufacturer resistance, as a result of court suits brought by injury victims. Some of the products have subsequently been recalled or taken off the market.

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to anyone who requests them and, like information from car companies such as GM, as well as from many other large corporations, are also distributed nationally through video news releases.

NATIONAL REVIEW readers who would like to know the truth about the Institute for Injury Reduction, my years of work as a safety researcher and advocate, and the GM-pickup-truck defect can write to us at 375 Prince George's Boulevard, Suite 200, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772. We will send our recent report, "GM's Campaign of Fear—Injuring Customers, Silencing Critics," which Mr. Olson chose to ignore, thus denying your readers the hard facts they deserve in order to make sound judgments about GM-pickup-truck defects, "rigged" tests, and corporate secrecy about hazardous products.

Benjamin Kelley
President
Institute for Injury Reduction
Upper Marlboro, Md.

Brian O'Neill challenges my account on a series of technical points: 1) wheel-turn rates, 2) tire wear, 3) power inputs, and 4) hidden weights. In each case, however, court documents and test reports fully back up what I wrote. Benjamin Kelley, the veteran tort-suit advocate and network-news manipulator, confirms in his scurrilous missive only that his memory and logic are no sounder than his grasp of ethical principles.

*1) To my astonishment, Mr. O'Neill now disputes my numbers on wheel-turn rates, seemingly unaware that my source for them was his own sworn testimony. In an April 1984 deposition (*Humphrey *v.* AMC*) Mr. O'Neill conceded that although lower rates would have prevailed if the steering wheel had started its "trapezoidal steer" at dead center, in fact in all but one case the wheel was still way over to the left from a previous maneuver, making the actual yank to the right much more severe. Under questioning by AMC's lawyer on that occasion he reviewed IIHS's own graphs and data and calculated the true "controller input" rates at 1,100 to 1,805 degrees per second, and initialed those numbers. Those were the ones I used. I can only wish Mr. O'Neill had clarified this discrepancy in his letter above.*

2) On tire wear: Mr. O'Neill is welcome to his quibble on what constitutes a skid. The question is whether putting a single Jeep through 201 runs "designed to explore the limits of the vehicle's handling," four of which actually rolled it over, might not inflict so-called shoulder or edge wear that could degrade its resistance to (further) rollover. As I correctly reported, this was one of AMC's concerns about the tests, and it was not theirs alone. An internal IIHS memo from Jack Wong to Brian O'Neill dated May 11, 1983, confirms the worry for seven of the eight rollovers: "I would question whether the Blue CJ-5 [rolled over with the aid of hidden weights—WO] had enough runs to cause shoulder wear. The other vehicles had much more testing performed and could have accumulated shoulder wear." Mr. O'Neill has testified that he did not actually check the tires himself, and of course AMC was never allowed anywhere near the scene to take its own look.

3) The accelerator issue calls for more technical detail (sorry, readers). Earlier testing had confirmed the common-sense notion that normal drivers, forced to swerve to avoid a sudden obstacle, will hit the brakes. At a minimum, it's safe to assume they'll take their foot off the gas pedal. When that happens, the car will begin slowing due to both 1) the ordinary deceleration that occurs in straight-line motion, and 2) the added deceleration caused by the friction of a hard swerve. Readers who have taken a sharp corner without braking may have noticed the second phenomenon: the turn itself helps to slow the car down.

IIHS could easily have used a simple no-brake-no-power protocol after launching a Jeep into a maneuver at a given speed, but instead employed a highly artificial "interrupted-spark" system that kept the throttle wide open and controlled speed by turning the ignition on and off. When the system sensed that the speed had fallen below the target, it provided a surge of power until it sensed that the target had been reached, at which point it turned power back off, and so back and forth. Result: the more severe the lateral forces on the vehicle—the more sideways trouble it was getting into—the more power the controller pumped in to overcome this natural slowing. "Gunning" is exactly the right word.

4) Speaking of severe lateral forces, one's head spins at the excuse for using but not disclosing the hidden weights. Heavy instrumentation had been on board for some (though far from all) of the non-filmed test runs; so when the CBS crew showed up, we are told, a comparable weight had to be added to keep things even. But no one imagines there was some great scientific insight to be gained by comparing filmed with non-filmed runs; the purpose of the filmed runs was plainly to gain footage, not new data. Mr. O'Neill is now reduced to arguing that the weight 1) was material enough that it had to be included to keep the runs comparable, but 2) was not material enough that it had to be disclosed to viewers or anyone else. Good luck.

*The weights were added "[a]t the request of IIHS personnel"; that is a direct quote from John Noettl of Dynamic Sciences in his test report, not a mere claim of mine. As for their positioning, Mr. Noettl testified in an April 1985 deposition (*Smittle *v.* AMC*) that the weights were added to "the center of the rear wheel wells":*

Q. And that is underneath those rear wheel wells, is that correct, John?

A. Yes.

Q. So that looking at the Jeep from above, you couldn't see those?

A. Right.

I hold no brief for the old CJ army-style Jeep. Mr. O'Neill may be right that its bad crash statistics should scare off prudent buyers, though as a free-market kind of guy I'm not shocked that people might want to buy vehicles that are as risky as motorcycles, just as they buy actual motorcycles. Whatever the off-road advantages of the old Jeep's open cab and high ground clearance, they no doubt leave it less forgiving of collision on blacktop than an ordinary car. But that's no excuse for running "tests" better suited to a James Bond movie than to 60 Minutes. *Small wonder an engineering report from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration dismissed the IIHS tests as contrived and unrealistic, or that NHTSA itself rejected the underlying defect petition.*

On the tire rims, I welcome Mr. O'Neill's clarification, which does not contradict what I wrote, that IIHS made no secret of having "modified" the rims to make them blow up (by amputating 70 per cent of their locking mechanisms). CBS had good reason to know this fact, but did not mention it on 60 Minutes. *As I stated, later depositions elicited telling details about how the testers had to go back to the lathe again and again, shaving off far more metal than they expected before they finally got the rim to burst. This was just the kind of fact that might have helped viewers sort out the controversy. CBS had suggested that tire-rim explosions often arise from quite subtle and mysterious causes, and showed a grieving mother speculating that a spot of rust might have been enough to cause her son's fatal explosion. Tire makers countered that it is well nigh impossible to get a rim to explode without grossly modifying or misusing it.*

Mr. O'Neill at least tries to be polite and substantive. His ex-colleague Benjamin Kelley is to rancor what Kuwait is

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to oil: he may have nothing else, but he's got that in abundance. I thought I let Mr. Kelley off pretty easily in my NR *piece, since his disgraceful role in the* Dateline NBC *affair went well beyond my brief mention. But he seems not to agree.*

Mr. Kelley knows perfectly well, and has conceded in print elsewhere, that I interviewed him at length earlier this year in my research on crash testing (statements from his many depositions and TV appearances filled in remaining details). It was the fairly juicy exposé of Mr. Kelley and his colleagues in Crain's Autoweek *(November 9, 1992) that provided the description of his crash films as "made-to-order," which tallies with reports that he has done footage at the request of TV producers. Would it really make him happier to change the phrase to "ready-made" or "off-the-shelf"? His charges about onboard fuel canisters are the sort of thing the interested parties may want to write in to answer, if they feel his credibility stands high enough to require a response.*

But these are side matters. Mr. Kelley's real point is to accuse me at outrageous and completely undocumented length of corruption, donor-truckling, false pretenses, and more. For all I know, these sorts of wild slurs pass for fair tactics in Mr. Kelley's brand of courtroom advocacy. But they are unlikely to cut much ice with attentive NR *readers, many of whom know the Manhattan Institute quite well for their distinguished work over the years in policy areas ranging from welfare reform and school choice to supply-side tax cuts and free trade.*

Someone should straighten out Mr. Kelley on the difference between the fellowship cited in my NR *identification and a staff position, as well as on the difference between philanthropically supported policy work and hired-gun advocacy. I gave the Manhattan Institute a call, by the way, and they confirmed—inconveniently for Mr. Kelley's conspiracy theory—that although they have a great many donors, his nemesis GM is not among them.*

It's almost worth putting up with the personal abuse for the sake of smoking out Mr. Kelley's priceless manifesto of Potemkin crash testing, according to which, once Ben Kelley adopts the public position that strawberry jam causes cancer in rats, he is apparently free to simulate the tragic sequence of events on film by showing the creatures gobbling up the tasty spread, then expiring miserably in rodent oncology wards, while omitting to film the intervening scene in which testers inject them with malignant cells. After all, that type of staging allows the "hazardous impact" to "be seen and further understood," by letting viewers see just what a rat with cancer looks like. On this view, an "absolutely top-notch" simulation can be based on undisclosed fakery from start to finish so long as the results look *like the mishaps being complained of. Which is why the TV viewer should always ask of a safety test: Is it real, or is it Ben Kelley?*

Enough of this person. Readers must wonder: How did the networks respond to my article? "We really have nothing to say about it," an ABC spokeswoman told the New York Daily News *when asked about* 20/20*'s undisclosed incendiary device. CBS said it would be bothersome to check into these matters after all these years, besides which its reports drew on many sources of information aside from*

"Sometimes, especially late at night, my conscience bothers me."

the questionable test films, so that viewers got a fair impression overall. This closely resembles NBC's original Dateline *defense.*

Corrections always being in order, I will close by noting one: the UCLA explosive test aired on 20/20 *was not done for Ford, though the researchers had been under contract to the automaker for the earlier tests in the series.* —WO

Unable to Commit

I enjoyed your issue on the press, but don't know what to make of Lorrin Anderson's characterization of me as a "committed partisan" ["Good Intentions"]. Committed to what? In recent months my essays have defended George Bush on Iraq and assailed Bill Clinton over his inaugural spending, Cabinet choices, and not standing by those Cabinet choices; defended the millions of dollars necessary to develop a toilet (excuse me, Waste Recycling Unit) aboard the space shuttle, and criticized the firing of Mike Ditka. I hope my essays, clearly labeled as opinion, actually *say* something; but if there's a partisan line discernible there, I don't see it.

I admire people with commitment, and just wish I had more. But I think journalism compromises commitment by always searching for contradictions and deceptions. No person or ideology looks very good for very long. Of course, maybe Mr. Anderson meant that I should *be* committed. If that's his point, he may have a good one.

Scott Simon
National Public Radio
Washington, D.C.

Postscript

My discussion of *New York Post* headlines ["Reliable Sources"], in which I hastily said that the front page had lost some of its elegance, was written before the second coming of Rupert Murdoch. Since the article's appearance, I am happy to note, the *Post* died for three days and has been resurrected—with its headlines decidedly intact.

Peter Shaw
New York, N.Y.

The Enchilada of Style

I am the Great Spirit, the *éminence grise*, the tutelary panjandrum, the urenchilada, the embodiment, the muse, the Ahura Mazda, the *élan vital*, the Alpha and the Omega, the meat and potatoes, the guts and the glory of the Style section of the *Washington Post*. But I am not the editor ["The Rise of Style"]. That title belongs to Mary Hadar. I've got enough to do as it is.

Henry Allen
Washington Post
Washington, D.C.

On the Margins

I am one of the many who pay heed to Samuel Lipman, *The New Criterion*'s always provocative and frequently reasonable observer of the classical-music scene. In a recent article on debut recitals for the *New York Times*, I made a blunt remark that could only be described as Lipmanesque: "Classical music has become a modest subculture, competing in a marketplace of differentiated tastes." It was an echo of a passage in Lipman's worthy volume *Music and More*: "Classical music now stands, for the first time in the modern world, on the periphery of culture."

Imagine my surprise, then, when I saw Lipman's miniature diatribe against me in your very droll "Decline of Ameri-

(Continues on page 68)

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THE VICE PRESIDENT

WASHINGTON

September 8, 1993

Dear Rusty,

I'm sending this letter Priority Mail, and I've sealed it up pretty well, so I hope it reaches you intact. I'm sending a whole bunch of clippings from this week's papers, and I don't want any to slip out on the way.

Read the clippings! Can you believe it? My plan to re-invent government is finally taking off! All I can say is: Why didn't somebody think of this sooner? I don't mean to sound cynical, but you'd be surprised at just how popular the idea of eliminating 250,000 federal jobs is. Lucky for us I thought of it, huh?

Look at the picture of me and Bill in front of the White House with those stacks and stacks of regulations and federal guidelines. Boy, that was a great moment. Six long months of research, brainstorming, and 18-hour days finally paid off. And then, as flashbulbs were popping and camera auto-winders were whirring, from the back of the press corps I heard someone say: "Mr. Vice President, how many of the regulations and guidelines in those books are environmental regulations and guidelines?"

Bill's right. The press is not on our side.

But we didn't let it spoil the mood. Re-inventing government will give this Administration the shot in the arm it needs. As Bill and I walked back to the Oval Office in triumph, Tipper ran out to meet us and gave me a big hug.

"I saw you on C-SPAN, and CNN, and the AP photo just came over the wire! You looked great out there!" she gushed. "And you looked good too, Bill!" He shrugged. I could see that he was losing the mood.

We headed into the Oval Office. Mack McLarty met us at the door. "Great. Absolutely great," he said. "And I must tell you, Gergen is very, very pleased."

"That's right," squawked a strange-sounding voice, "I'm really thrilled." I looked around for Mr. Gergen, but he wasn't there. McLarty gestured to a small intercom on the President's desk. "I'm downstairs," squawked the intercom, "in my small, recently converted office. It's less obtrusive this way. I don't believe in playing power games. Just go ahead with the meeting, and I'll just chime in whenever."

HRC and Ira Magaziner walked in at that moment. HRC saw the intercom, stopped in her tracks, and then turned to George Stephanopoulos and mouthed "Gergen?" George nodded. HRC and Ira sat down.

Mack began. "Okay, we're all here. We've got a busy month or two ahead of us. Our re-inventing government plan is off to a great start. Al, what's next?" I leaned back in my chair. All ears on me. I've got to tell you, Rusty, I was on a high. I had just raised the President's poll ratings four whole points. I had established myself as a can-do guy. And I think I put an end to that stupid nickname "Mr. Ozone." From now on, people can call me "Mr. Re-Inventor," which for my money is a lot catchier.

"What's next, you ask?" I asked. "Well, I'm going to be on David Letterman tonight. And I may stick around New York the next day and do Regis and Kathy Lee."

"I think what Mack meant, Al," crackled the intercom, "was what's next politically?"

"Oh. Well, in that sense, Bill just has to fire 252,000 federal-employee-union members, Congress has to vote to cut $108 billion out of the next five years' budgets, and we're off to the races."

"I see," gurgled the box. "What about NAFTA?"

HRC jumped to her feet and began to pace wildly. "What about health care?" she shouted. "Huh? Ever heard of that? A little thing I've been working on for, like, a year? When are we ever going to address MY needs? I swear to God it's like I don't exist any more!" She flopped down on the couch and sighed. The room was silent except for the faint scratching sound of pen and paper. It was George Stephanopoulos. He very quietly held up a legal pad, on which he had written, "I totally agree." He gave her the "thumbs up" sign and smiled.

"I'm glad you expressed yourself, Hillary," hissed the box. "But I'm sure you know that NAFTA and health care are equally important. It isn't a case of one having priority over the other. This Administration doesn't work on priorities. But we have to face a few unpleasant facts. It may come down to a choice between NAFTA now and health care later, or nothing at all. But I'm interrupting here. It's Mack's meeting. I'll just sign off."

We heard a click, then static. George scrawled on his pad and held it up: "He's still listening." George is getting really paranoid, Rusty.

We all kind of looked at each other for a while without saying anything. Finally, I stood up. "Well," I said, "if we've got nothing else to resolve, I'd like to go home and get ready for Letterman. I've got a few jokes to try out on Tipper."

Tip and I headed out, but as we did, I could swear I heard a chuckle coming from the intercom.

Wish me luck. I may be doing Brinkley this Sunday!

Your pal, Al

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Calisthenics for a Free Mind

RUSH LIMBAUGH

WHILE doing my little radio and television programs in New York I have been privileged to meet some of the people who were instrumental in shaping my views and my core beliefs. First and foremost, I've gotten to know William F. Buckley Jr.

He is the epitome of conservative scholarship. He is a gentleman. Of all the thinkers I have had conversations with, Buckley is one of the most original. If you want to talk politics, history, philosophy, cultural criticism, theology, sailing, or all of them at once, he is your man. Many have experienced the pyrotechnics of his wit and analysis, but considerably fewer have personally experienced, as I have, the hospitality and grace that he exudes. If there is a modern Renaissance man, someone who knows everything significant there is to know, it may well be William Buckley.

Happy Days Were Here Again: Reflections of a Libertarian Journalist, by William F. Buckley Jr. (Random House, 473 pp., $25)

Which is why in January 1985 I was so drawn to Buckley's article in *Playboy* (a magazine I always scour for articles by conservatives) called "Redefining Smart." Buckley explained that in the waning days of the twentieth century, human knowledge is growing at such an explosive rate that it is no longer possible to keep up—as it had been, for example, for Erasmus in the sixteenth century. The author's point was that in the absence of the abiiity to absorb even a small percentage of available information, we need a common touchstone: to be found, he said, in "the great unthreatened truths."

I devoured this piece, and its thesis resonated with my life. I had left college after one year, and it later occurred to me that this may have been a mistake. The people I admired among my peers were all formally educated. Knowing things was essential, I realized. It got you included in interesting conversations. It got you invited places. It got you the attention of girls.

So I embarked on a long process of self-education, reading books, newspapers, magazines (including that paragon of the Western literary tradition, *Playboy*). I was convinced that not only did I have to know everything, but I had to constantly *demonstrate* everything I knew.

Over time, maturity taught me that although I was pretty good at it, there was something enormously more important than the accumulation of data. And that was the confidence in central, organizing moral and even (dare I say it?) religious ideas that formed the points of my inner compass. I call them my core beliefs; Buckley calls such concepts the "eternal verities," or the Basic Formulas of Civilization.

Fred Carlson

There are few who so eloquently defend and celebrate the strengths of Western civilization. That is why civilization is quite fortunate that Random House has published an irresistible collection of Buckley columns, essays, and other writings called *Happy Days Were Here Again*. Not being an intellectual, I do not pretend to understand the title, but I heartily agree that the occasion of the publication of this book is a happy day.

The collection, which includes the masterly "Redefining Smart," is pure pleasure. I dare you to dip into it anywhere without becoming captivated by the bracing prose, the hard-edged political analysis, the gleeful puncturing of modern cultural idiocy. Most compelling, as always, is the logic, the point-by-point, flawless construction of each case. The notorious vocabulary sparkles everywhere, but the words hang on the strongest chain of unassailable argument.

Not to mention the rough art of the retort. In addition to his skills as polemical swashbuckler, regularly replying to barbs in what sounds like very acid Latin, Buckley is a deft street fighter, in one case dismissing a *Washington Post* pundit's point with the useful: "What c-r-a-p." More power to him. (That piece, "His Supreme Preppiness," also contains one of my favorite Buckley lines: "the black lady who is alternately fat and thin, I forget her name.")

I had read quite a few of these articles and columns before, in newspapers or in *NR*. As stand-alone pieces, they are stimulating and stirring. But nothing compares with a full, book-length dose of Buckley: nearly five hundred pages of witnessing, in Buckley's own words, "the calisthenics of the free mind."

Reading these essays is like opening a window on history—recent history and the history of mankind. Conveniently divided into attitudinal categories such as "Assailing," "Analyzing," "Playing," and "Celebrating," the selections challenge the reader again and again to remember, to see anew. There is fresh fun at the expense of Jesse Jackson, Mario Cuomo, John Kenneth Galbraith, Carl Sagan, Mikhail Gorbachev. And sagacity elicited—with a twist of Buckley—from Ronald Reagan, Clarence Thomas, Jack Kemp, Milton Friedman.

Mr. Limbaugh is a radio and television commentator based in New York, and the author of The Way Things Ought to Be.

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Every article is must reading—even the ones that argue for the legalization of drugs, an issue on which I profoundly disagree. I especially recommend "An Agenda for Conservatives," one of the longer (14 pages) pieces in the book. I enjoyed his taking on the environmentalists, who exhibit, he says, "a form of fanaticism that lies athwart the natural relationships between man, animal, and nature." True. That's why I call them "wackos."

Introducing . . . Bill Buckley

The following is excerpted from John Leonard's introduction to Happy Days Were Here Again:

THE word *zest* comes to mind, and so does *savor*. Yet all of Buckley's motions are accomplished with an oddly sleepy sort of Robert Mitchum look. He was once asked on *Laugh-In*, "Mr. Buckley, I notice that on your own program you're always sitting down. Is this because you can't think on your feet?" He hesitated for a masterly moment; then replied: "It is hard . . . to stand up . . . under the weight . . . of all that I know." But sitting down, he also *lists*, leaning away from a Noam Chomsky or an Arthur Schlesinger Jr., as if in a hurry to write another column.

Long before he was an exemplary stereotype, I went to work for Buckley as an editorial assistant at NATIONAL REVIEW. I ferried copy to the printer in Connecticut. I monitored the left-wing press. I wrote letters to the *NR* editor criticizing everything in the magazine, to prime a very dry correspondence pump. I was sent to Cuba shortly after Castro's revolution. I went to lunch with Whittaker Chambers, which was like going to lunch with the Brothers Karamazov. I was taught, by Publisher Bill Rusher, how to eat with a fork. I was taught, by Editor Bill Buckley, how to assemble and fly a kite. I was taught, by Managing Editor Priscilla Buckley, how to assemble and fly a paragraph. To this day, the only two important matters I'm certain we agree on are that Bill's sister, Priscilla, and his composer, Bach, are unexcelled in God's creation.

But after a season, I went away: to California, novel-writing, and eventually the *New York Times*. Like so many other young writers he took off the street and published in his pages in the early *NR* days—Garry Wills, Joan Didion, Renata Adler, Arlene Croce—I ended up a liberal. "For a while," Buckley wrote in *Overdrive*, "I thought we were running a finishing school for apostates." As if to compensate, he finally hired George Will, and I hope he's happy. But what about the rest of us? Why, staring at him on the other side of the barricades, don't we bare our fangs? Where's the Oedipal revolt, so surpassingly expressed in the Cultural Revolution of the Red Guards in China's Guangzi province, when they cannibalized their high-school principals?

To be sure, I wrote an article about NATIONAL REVIEW for a satirical magazine in 1963, a parody of Whittaker Chambers's letter to his children in *Witness*. Buckley's response? Four years later, when the *Times* was deciding whether to hire me, he sent them a copy of this article just to prove, as he said, that I wasn't "right-bitten." In *Life* magazine in 1971, in a critique of *Firing Line*, I made fun of his promiscuous analogies, invidious juxtapositions, and pre-emptive obfuscations. So he invited me on *Firing Line*. Much later on, reviewing one of his Blackford Oakes novels, I quoted a passage in which the hero ransacks a refrigerator: "There was chicken, ham, cheese, white wine. He put together a plate with slabs of each." I said this sounded to me like a wet plate. So I was invited, not only to a Christmas party, but to Moscow and Leningrad, with the *NR* staff, where Keith Mano shook his fist at the Winter Palace, reminding me of what Herzen said to Bakunin: "One must open men's eyes, not tear them out."

In *Cruising Speed*, he told us: "I can understand the occasional necessity to execute people, but never to hurt their feelings." This explains, in part, why he puts up with so many of us who had disappointed him with our disorderly politics and chaotic lives; and why we cherish him no matter what he says.

To speak, however, of the friend is to neglect the exemplar. You may have noticed that even his "apostates" tend to be political, noisy, and trouble-making, as if the world were a wound about which, on our bandages, in our blood, it is necessary constantly to scribble. What is the lesson? To be a serious character in your own life, in your own century. But also to send up ideas like kites, to eat some peanut butter, and to hear some music.

I have paused to quarrel, or to smile, at every other paragraph in these wind-blown pages. There are again the suspect analogies and juxtapositions, and the fancy words—but also a lovely essay defending the writer's *working* vocabulary, the very jazz of composition. If there are predictable enthusiasms (capital punishment, Evelyn Waugh, Chartres cathedral, Star Wars, and the *Titanic*) and predictable *bêtes noires* (abortion, Lowell Weicker, the Democratic Party, drug dealers, Dartmouth College), there are also surprises: that he went to see Mapplethorpe's dirty pictures, although not Scorsese's *Last Temptation*. That he opposes a government bailout of the failed S&Ls, would internationalize Jerusalem, has never gone to a baseball game nor watched *Oprah*. That he approves of Head Start, and disapproves of the Inquisition.

What we have here is vintage Buckley, on Nathaniel Hawthorne and Malcolm Forbes, Edmund Burke and Dan Rather, free trade and Tiananmen Square, Jack Kemp, Clarence Thomas, Meir Kahane, and original sin, not to neglect his favorite composer, on whom he quotes biologist Lewis Thomas, who was asked what we should send up in a rocket to speak on our behalf to whatever alien civilizations there might be in outer space. "I would send the complete works of Johann Sebastian Bach," said Thomas. Pause: "But that would be boasting."

—JOHN LEONARD

Mr. Leonard is television critic for New York, *a novelist, and an essayist.*

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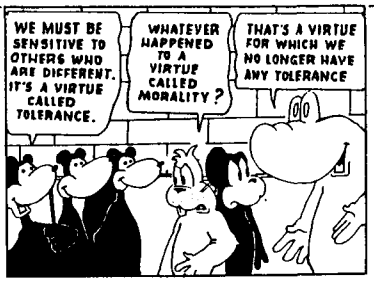
The strongest point he makes in this analysis is that "the official prejudice against religion" has been central to the development of the stationary underclass. "An Agenda" maps out the battlefield so effectively that the only thing left is to say: Read it.

My favorite threads in the grand tapestry here are those of celebration: of freedom, history, the legacy of the West. I would like to quote a somewhat lengthy excerpt from "Gratitude," which occurs toward the end of the collection. It is a beautiful and wise passage, in which the soaring language does justice to the soaring ideas:

> Our offense is . . . that [we accept] without any thought of any debt incurred the patrimony we all enjoy, those of us who live in the free world. The numbing, benumbing thought that we owe nothing to Plato and Aristotle, nothing to the prophets who wrote the Bible, nothing to the generations who fought for freedoms activated in the Bill of Rights; we are basket cases of ingratitude, so many of us. We cannot hope to repay in kind what Socrates gave us, but to live lives without any sense of obligation . . . is spiritually atrophying.
>
> We cannot repay the gift of the Beatitudes, with their eternal, searing meaning—*Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* But our ongoing failure to recognize that we owe a huge debt that can be requited only by gratitude . . . marks us as the masses in revolt: against our benefactors, our civilization, against God himself.
>
> To fail to experience gratitude when walking through the corridors of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, when listening to the music of Bach and Beethoven, when exercising our freedom to speak . . . is to decline to express, however clumsily, to feel, however coarsely, our gratitude for the fruits of genius, for generosity, human and divine, for the great wellsprings of human talent and concern that gave us Shakespeare, Abraham Lincoln, Mark Twain, our parents, our friends . . . We need a rebirth of gratitude for those who have cared for us, living and, mostly, dead; the high moments of our way of life are their gifts to us. We must remember them in our thoughts and in our prayers, and in our deeds.

I do occasionally, I admit, attempt to imitate Mr. Buckley, as those of you who listen to my radio program will recognize. I do so without apology, for it is indeed my most sincere form of flattery. But as this excerpt—and more so, the whole collection of essays—proves, some may vaguely approximate his manner, but there is only one William F. Buckley Jr. His is the voice of a genius and a patriot. Gratitude to him lifts our hearts. □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Minority Reports

KEN MASUGI

THESE two books represent extremes in scholarship on America's greatest ambition—to be a free and self-governing nation of many nations. Racial and ethnic conflict at home undermines the example America gives peoples seeking peace from such struggles abroad. Can America afford the world, following George Washington's admonition, "the magnanimous and too novel example of a People always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence"? This is the deepest question these books raise.

Mexican Americans, by UCLA political scientist Peter Skerry, is an important book that offers common-sense reflections on ethnic politics in general and Mexican-American politics in particular. Mr. Skerry's careful scholarship helps his readers thoughtfully address current issues such as immigration, bilingual education, and ethnic identity. Skerry combines social-science research and astute observation to produce a work worthy of his teachers Nathan Glazer and James Q. Wilson. Ronald Takaki's screed, *A Different Mirror*, reflects the intellectual poverty but the politi-

Mexican Americans: The Ambivalent Minority, by Peter Skerry (Free Press, 463 pp., $27.95)

A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America, by Ronald Takaki (Little, Brown, 508 pp., $27.95)

Mr. Masugi is an associate professor of politics at Michigan State University and adjunct fellow of the Claremont Institute.

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cal force of the multicultural assault on America. Absent a principled response to Professor Takaki's text—which surely will receive widespread adoption in university courses—America's future generations, of all ethnic and racial groups, will be left more alienated from their Western roots than ever before.

The thesis of *Mexican Americans* is encapsulated in the two photos on its dustjacket—one of Texas Mexicans (with a priest prominent) solemnly taking the oath to become American citizens; the other a montage of a rally of mostly young Mexican Americans (one wearing a UCLA T-shirt) chanting, bearing candles, fists raised. By comparing Mexican-American politics in San Antonio and in Los Angeles, Skerry contrasts two sharply different ways Mexican Americans understand themselves. The Mexican Americans of San Antonio practice a traditional version of ethnic politics, like that of other white ethnic groups, while their Los Angeles counterparts emphasize their separate status *as a race*, in order to extort the benefits of redistributive politics.

In brief, Skerry concludes that there is no necessity that Mexican Americans segregate themselves from American society; America can absorb them the same way it has absorbed other immigrants throughout our history. Here the San Antonio example of local self-government and civic involvement provides an emphatic—though perhaps unique—example. However, powerful forces are weakening America's capacity to absorb. The principal disruptive force is not, say, the proximity of Mexico; rather, it is the style of coalition politics practiced by Mexican-American politicians (especially in Los Angeles), a politics that makes alliances with black and other liberal politicians. "Parachuted" into safe seats in reapportioned local and congressional districts (as ordered in some cases by the Reagan Justice Department), the L.A. Mexican politicos not only lack but actually shun roots in their "communities." Hence, they actually oppose voter-registration efforts. Indeed, Los Angeles politicians avoid contact with parish churches precisely because they don't wish, Skerry quotes, to "run the risk of stirring up the right-to-lifers." Thus, although the majority of Mexican Americans are anti-abortion, Mexican-American politicians are typically pro-abortion.

Here Skerry's insights raise some uncomfortable questions about the multi-ethnic future of America. Is San Antonio merely a symbol of a fading past? Support for bilingual education unites Mexican-American politicians with other Hispanics, despite strong equivocation by the rank-and-file. Furthermore, one should view this disjunction between popular and elite opinion in national perspective. Congressional grants corrupt local self-government, which becomes more dependent on Washington and increasingly tied to the national ethnic leadership rather than to the grassroots organizations (such as churches) or the unorganized rank-and-file. It should be noted that Skerry's analysis of Mexican-American elites also applies perfectly to virtually all Asian-American groups, whose leaders are lapdogs of the Left, even though majorities of Asian Americans voted for Reagan and Bush.

Moreover, non-governmental elites (such as the Ford Foundation) impede the Americanization of Mexicans by subsidizing the racial-minority model. Most important of all in making Mexican Americans racially conscious is higher education, as students are "born again at Berkeley."

A rising figure in the academy's war on liberal education and full citizenship is Berkeley ethnic-studies professor Ronald Takaki. From his sometimes useful (and thoroughly polemical) study of nineteenth-century Americans' view of race, *Iron Cages* (1979), Takaki has deteriorated as a scholar. He now produces books that are merely polemical, and with only partisan political usefulness.

A Different Mirror synthesizes Takaki's previous books on black and Asian-American history and adds Indians, Irish, Jews, and "Chicanos" (that term from the Sixties for Mexican Americans). All have been exploited, Professor Takaki explains, though the Africans who were imported for slavery were exploited to a much greater degree. Capitalism and what passes for democracy have so abused these disparate (and often clashing) groups that they should look to each other for "connectedness," in "working-class solidarity." Such a comparison distorts, for one, the experiences of his fellow Asian Americans, who have won prosperity by rules which are now being changed to their disadvantage.

To cite just one telling example of his vulgar reading of American history: contending that America has always been a society fundamentally hostile to non-whites, Professor Takaki cites Benjamin Franklin: "Why increase the Sons of Africa, by planting them in America, where we have so fair an opportunity, by excluding all Blacks and Tawnys, of increasing the lovely white?" It evidently never occurred to Takaki that Franklin was using an aesthetic judgment to make an argument against importing slaves, whose presence would undermine American republicanism. After all, the character (not the color) of a nation's immigrants is always of concern, particularly for a nation attempting to establish self-government.

But for Takaki the American Founding was not a world-historic attempt to make a universal principle (human equality) the basis for a particular nation, but rather an excuse and precondition for "economic acquisition and expansion."

Of course, none of this criticism of Takaki is to deny that American racial and ethnic minorities have often been treated unjustly. But others have told that story much better. For books on Asian Americans, try those by Roger Daniels (liberal but fair) or the popular works by Bill Hosokawa. For African Americans, the anthology edited by Howard Brotz; for Mexican and Hispanic Americans, Richard Rodriguez's essays, Linda Chavez's *Out of the Barrio*, and of course Peter Skerry's work. Finally, as general books, Thomas Sowell's *Ethnic America* and Stephan Thernstrom's massive *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*. Among Asian Americans alone, there are numerous conservatives who could counter Takaki, who appears on TV as an Asian-American spokesman. These more calmly reflective souls include a true scholar, historian Reed Ueda of Tufts; journalists such as Lance Izumi of the Claremont Institute and Arthur Hu of *Asian Week*; and numerous economists and political scientists.

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The superiority of the West to other cultures lies partly in its unique ability to engage in rational self-criticism, while avoiding self-flagellation. Although I would say that slavery is the central political and moral issue in American political history, it does not follow that the experiences of all minority groups are best understood in the light of slavery. An insightful multicultural history would have the dignity of *Death Comes for the Archbishop*, Willa Cather's tale of the civilizing of the Southwest, rather than the ranting of a Marxist tract or a deconstructed classic. It would reflect the wisdom of Abraham Lincoln, who saw the genius of America in its ability to achieve the peak of Western civilization, in which strangers, who might formerly have attempted to enslave others, become friends. □

Pandaemonium Revisited

ROGER KIMBALL

Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics, by Daniel Patrick Moynihan (Oxford, 221 pp., $19.95)

'SO STRONG is this propensity of mankind to fall into mutual animosities that where no substantial occasion presents itself the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to kindle their unfriendly passions and excite their most violent conflicts." A recent comment on Bosnia? Egypt? India? Los Angeles? No. It is James Madison, in *The Federalist Papers*, urging the Union and warning against the dangers of faction. If the thought seems strikingly up-to-date, perhaps it is because, as Madison suggests, the causes of faction are "sown in the nature of man."

It is not surprising, then, that the burst of euphoria surrounding the fall of Communism in 1989 should have been so short-lived. What happened? The brief answer is human nature. A more complicated answer involves the sudden resurgence, after that fall, of nationalism and ethnicity. One of the most fertile meditations on the latter is to be found in *Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics*, by Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

Recalling Senator Moynihan's recent support for the largest tax increase in history, we may wonder whether he always bears *The Federalist Papers* sufficiently in mind. Did not Madison observe, in Federalist No. 10, that the power of taxation presents the greatest opportunity and temptation "to trample on the rules of justice"? Early in his new book, Senator Moynihan comments that affluence is a good cure for inter-ethnic rivalry. Does he really believe that Clintonizing the U.S. economy will foster affluence? Still, when he moves from his position as chairman of the Senate Finance Committee to the printed page, Mr. Moynihan is often more persuasive.

This brief book began as a series of lectures at Oxford University. In one respect, it applies to the international scene the sober thinking that Mr. Moynihan and Nathan Glazer brought to domestic ethnic problems in their 1963 book, *Beyond the Melting Pot*. "The point about the melting pot," they wrote, "is that it did not happen."

It is worth remembering that not so long ago the whole phenomenon of ethnicity seemed an anachronism. In the 1933 edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* the word is listed as *Obs. rare* and is defined as "Heathendom, heathen superstition." In this country "the liberal expectancy" (in Milton M. Gordon's phrase) held sway: ethnicity was an ephemeral product of mass immigration, a "transitional" stage on the way to a fully integrated "American" character. In the Soviet Union, it was the expectation of "proletarian internationalism." Quaint customs such as folk dancing might persist, even different languages; but they would henceforth be (in Stalin's famous phrase) "nationalist in form and socialist in content."

Senator Moynihan reminds us early and often that he foretold the disintegration of the Soviet Union—partly from economic paralysis, partly from ethnic unrest—as far back as 1979. His satisfaction in being correct has led him to underestimate rather drastically, as many other liberals do, the role played by Ronald Reagan's leadership and commitment to U.S. military strength in the demise of the Soviet Union. This is one subject on which Mr. Moynihan tends to dispense Democratic boilerplate. Thus he remarks that in the 1980s the finances of the U.S. and the Soviet governments were becoming "equally unstable." Really? *Equally* unstable? Perhaps he would care to exchange his dollars for rubles.

The larger problem, however, is that the defeat of the Soviet Union is looking less and less like a triumph for anybody. Senator Moynihan is a keen student of this irony. The Communist empire that was to extinguish all such parochialisms as race, nationhood, state, has crumbled into warring factions precisely along ethnic and nationalistic lines, just as he had foretold. One is reminded of T. S. Eliot's melancholy view of history in *Gerontion*:

Mr. Kimball is managing editor of The New Criterion.

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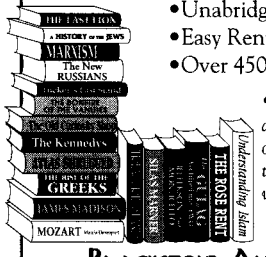

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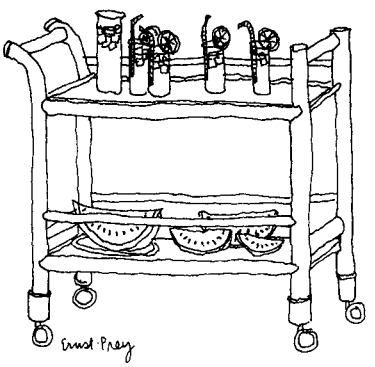
After such knowledge, what
forgiveness? Think now
History has many cunning passages,
contrived corridors
And issues, deceives with
whispering ambitions,
Guides us by vanities. . . .
Unnatural vices
Are fathered by our heroism.
Virtues
Are forced upon us by our impudent
crimes.

Pontificating about the bloodshed in Bosnia, *The Economist* spoke recently about "centuries-old grudges," "visceral hatred of the neighbors," etc. What must give us pause is that, notwithstanding the savagery and violence exploding in the former Soviet Union and its erstwhile satellites, the differences of ethnicity—of genealogy, language, custom—are in many cases exceedingly narrow. This leads to the frightening principle that, as Senator Moynihan puts it, "Ethnic conflict does not require great differences; small will do." It is the problem of what Madison called "faction" updated with lots of local color. Optimists point out that despite the barbarism and unrest, we are not back at 1914; Senator Moynihan reminds us that "in 1914 the opimists contended that it was not 1914."

"Pandaemonium" was Milton's name for the home of Satan. *Pandaemonium* is an effort to describe how it looks when established here on earth. Senator Moynihan's book is largely a meditation on the recent history and politics of ethnic conflict: Which figures have been especially implicated in its rise? What policies and goals did they pursue? His subsidiary purpose—or indulgence—is exhortation: "We should surely resume the business of trying to advance a rational, liberal, legal world order that was so much on display even to the moment the lights went out in Europe in 1914." Okay, let's. But how? Senator Moynihan is not particularly helpful on that matter. But he is very good indeed on exploding the rhetoric that has fueled nationalism and ethnic conflict. The central phrase is "self-determination." The unwitting villain is Woodrow Wilson. Senator Moynihan shows that what is "self-determination" for me often provides the rationale for oppression of thee.

The rhetoric of self-determination was bequeathed to us by President Wilson in the aftermath of the First World War during the formation of the League of Nations. Robert Lansing, Wilson's second Secretary of State, was alert to the political dangers of irresponsible rhetoric. "The gift of clever phrasing," he wrote in his diary during the Paris Peace Conference in 1918, "may be a curse unless the phrases are put to the test of sound, practical application before being uttered. . . .



"When the President talks of 'self-determination,' what unit has he in mind? Does he mean a race, a territorial area, or a community? Without a definite unit, which is practical, application of this principle is dangerous to peace and stability."

In this context, it is illuminating that Hitler explicitly invoked President Wilson and the "right of self-determination" when he made his "last territorial demand" and claimed Czechoslovakia for Germany.

But the rhetoric of virtue can survive many setbacks. Near the beginning of the Charter of the United Nations, the purpose of the organization is spelled out: "To develop friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace." As originally drafted, the sentence read "To develop friendly relations among nations, and to take appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace." The Soviet Union insisted on the intervening phrase. After the Dumbarton Oaks conference, Molotov said that his government "attached first-rate importance" to the phrase "self-determination." When we learn that Stalin sought to have all 16 Soviet republics recognized as sovereign states, we begin to understand why.

What the passion for "self-determination" neglects is the claims of sovereignty: the claims, that is to say, of order, stability, union. Elevated into an absolute—into a "right"—the principle of self-determination is a prescription for anarchy. Senator Moynihan quotes the report of a commission set up by the League of Nations: "The separation of a minority from the State of which it forms a part and its incorporation in another State can only be considered as an altogether exceptional solution, a last resort when the State lacks either the will or the power to enact and apply just and effective guarantees." And yet this "exceptional solution" was incorporated in the UN Charter as a principle of international order.

Or international disorder. At the turn of the century, there were approximately fifty states in the world community; now there are over two hundred. In the coming decades, we can expect many newcomers. Most of these will be poor. Most will be politically unstable. Few will be models of parliamentary democracy. As claims on the treasure, tolerance, and protection of the industrialized world increase, so will what Senator Moynihan piquantly calls "compassion fatigue."

He is conservatively optimistic. "The world does not defy understanding," he assures us, "and what can be understood can sometimes be modified." Yet he is sufficiently disabused to acknowledge that what Reinhold Niebuhr called "the myth of democratic universality"—the idea that democracy is a live option for all nations—may, in the immediate future, be only that: a myth. Senator Moynihan notes that civil rights preceded political rights in the West; the protection of civil rights may be the best we can hope for in many places.

The best we can hope for is unlikely to be the reality we will have to live with. What we have witnessed in the past several years is a retribalization of the world. It is a movement calculated to defeat every liberal expectancy. Senator Moynihan quotes one Serb militiaman: "I have cut the throats of three Turks so far, and I don't ever have nightmares." What do appeals to "international law" mean in such cases?

Here at home, we have riots and increasing racial and ethnic tension. Senator Moynihan is probably right in predicting a rise of "caste retaliation" on the streets. This is the grim, "practical" side of the ideology of multicul-

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turalism which has swept American schools and universities. Once again, ironies abound. Senator Moynihan notes that in the 1960s, at the very moment when such practices were being declared abhorrent, ethnicity was becoming the basis for distributing all manner of group rewards throughout the government, the academy, and even in businesses. The announced ambition was to be color blind; the result was quotas. Today the application for the Graduate Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Harvard University states: "It is to your advantage to state if you are a member of an ethnic minority." What happened to *equal* opportunity? "The challenge," Senator Moynihan writes, "is to make the world safe for and from ethnicity." Unfortunately, he has not provided any blueprints. □

FILM

Chess without Tears, Sex without Limbs

JOHN SIMON

AMONG the many jejune genres of Hollywood movies, not the least paltry is the problemless problem film, of which ***Searching for Bobby Fischer*** is a prime example. Based on a book by the sportswriter Fred Waitzkin, it is the story of Waitzkin, his wife, Bonnie, and their son, Josh, the chess prodigy. What should be done when a seven-year-old evinces, seemingly out of nowhere, a spectacular talent for chess, which may make him a champion, but also deprive him of the needed normal childhood? Perhaps even a normal adulthood; do I not read in the *New York Times* that Nigel Short "possesses a rare and almost spiritual gift for a chess player: he is well-adjusted enough not to be totally destroyed by losing a single game"?

How does the movie, written and directed by Steven Zaillian, handle this material? It presents the most angelic-looking nine-year-old, Max Pomeranc (himself a chess-playing cherub), as Josh, all soulful eyes, *gamin* features, and a wonderfully forthright manner. It surrounds him with four adults who, warts and all, are good to their last wart. There is father Fred, a decent amateur chess player, who, astounded by his son's talent, urges him on mightily. But he is no exploitative monomaniac, possibly because he is also the writer of the underlying book. Mother Bonnie, the humane protectress of her boy's childhood, is neither soppily sentimental nor hysterically overprotective.

Mr. Simon is NR*'s film critic.*

Then there are the two chess teachers. The unofficial one is Vinnie, a young black man, one of those Washington Square speed-chess hustlers, who encourages Josh to play a recklessly intuitive game, all heart and soul. The official one is Bruce Pandolfini, a grandmaster turned teacher, who takes on only the most brilliant students, and who teaches Josh both to play with extreme intellectual control and to hate and despise his opponents as required. All four guardian figures are made more grandiose than they are likely to be (Pandolfini, I gather, is different in life), and one has the sensation of watching what is supposed to be racy reality being turned into second-rate fiction.

The ghost of Bobby Fischer (now wanted by the law in the U.S.) hovers over the film, sometimes in actual visual or verbal references, which should remind everyone of the nexus between genius at chess and dementia. Chess has always struck me as the most fanatical, sanguinary, and time-consuming of games, not healthful enough for a sport or productive enough for social or artistic significance. It is sequestered and sterile, the antithesis of a humanistic pursuit.

Zaillian, who proved himself a successful popularizer (not meant as a term of praise) with his screenplay for *Awakenings*, here undertakes his first directorial assignment. He does better than I would have expected. From a German database containing 400,000 chess positions, the real-life Josh and Pandolfini were urged to lay out every move of the on-screen games, allowing the actor-players to concentrate on their acting. By skillful use of extreme closeup, Zaillian makes chess intensely photogenic. The individual pieces and various groupings of them, shot in that inflated, heroic proximity, take on a sinister beauty, especially when slanted camera angles add their emotional spice. And the sonorous exploitation of the punching of timers after every move creates an insistent, percussive syncopation that plays cat-and-mouse with your nerves.

Joe Mantegna puts his natural slipperiness to good use as Fred Waitzkin, but Joan Allen makes the wise mother a shade too solemn. A schoolteacher (played by the talented Laura Linney) who particularly strives to prevent Josh's pre-emption is directed into a humorless do-gooder, rather than the voice of intelligent compassion. The accomplished Laurence Fishburne is coolly charming as Vinnie, and Michael Nirenberg does well by the underwritten part of Josh's chessboard near-nemesis. But as this antagonist's trainer, Robert Stephens gives one of his by now patented loony performances, always lurking and skulking, half hidden by shadows and objects for minimum visibility.

But the film's chief disappointment is the Pandolfini of the once solid Ben Kingsley. Having swallowed his publicity hook, line, and sinker, the actor affects a seemingly gratuitous Scottish burr and brogue, and bestows those sometimes fake-modest, sometimes genuinely condescending smiles I watched him display as the lionized jury member of the recent Montreal Film Festival. The director of cinematography was the gifted but sometimes too arty Conrad Hall, who, having some experience as a director, may have guided the neophyte Zaillian through his difficulties. But there is no way of saving a film that shies away from the problem it proposes to tackle, and shows Josh as an ever-sunny, cheer-dispensing, supremely adjusted youngster.

■ To anyone interested in sampling the rottenest apple from the bottom of the cinematic barrel, let me commend Jennifer Chambers Lynch's ***Boxing Helena***, a film acclaimed at the Sundance Festival, success at which is a guarantee of mediocrity or worse. Kim Basinger backed out of the lead, causing her to incur a ruinous seven-

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million-dollar lawsuit. Believe me, though: every lost penny of it was well spent. Miss Lynch, whose sole claim to fame is her vastly overrated father, the director of *Blue Velvet* and *Twin Peaks*, manages to go Papa David one better in tastelessness, incompetence, and benightedness, unaware even that the accent in "Helena" does not go on the penult, for which offense alone I'd banish her to St. Helena.

Miss Lynch wrote the screenplay from a story by Philippe Caland, of whom I have never heard, and sincerely hope never to hear again. This is the tale of Dr. Nick Cavanaugh (an unlikely name for a surgeon), who is effete, namby-pamby, and supremely masochistic (an unlikely personality for a surgeon). He falls abjectly in love with the gorgeous, haughty Helena, who, after an unsuccessful initial date, keeps icily rejecting him, as well she, or anyone, might, given the mewling pest he is. When, trying to escape his crawling advances, Helena is hit by a car, Nick performs an operation on her in his private mansion that leaves her legless. Now in a wheelchair and his love prisoner, Helena can still verbally cut off Nick's attempts to wriggle into her affection: so the worthy sawbones operates away her remaining limbs, turning her into a nice little torso to feed, cosset, and blissfully toy with.

There are only two ways to make such a film. Either you have to be a tormented genius like Luis Buñuel, and turn out a dark, Sadean phantasmagoria, or you must be a clever outright pornographer. Not having the talent for the one, or the stomach for the other, Jennifer Lynch proffers unerotic titillation, sexless nastiness, mindless temerity. But also ultimate cravenness: the picture ends with a huge copout, denying all that went before. Reviewing it in the *Times*, Janet Maslin finds the movie not contemptuous of women, because "even without her arms, the cruel, beautiful Helena manages to hold all the cards." Miss Lynch displays "talent" and "control" as "no visible bloodshed is involved in transforming Helena from a cursing, prop-throwing hellion to the enshrined beauty Nick . . . wanted her to be." Just think what Shylock could have done with Nick's talent for bloodless surgery!

Divesting Helena of her limbs is, for Miss Maslin, a therapeutic act, cutting short her short-temperedness. The "engrossing" Miss Lynch, it seems, exhibits an "odd but coherent imagination," which may be true if wall-to-wall nonsense is construed as coherence. Miss Maslin's main reservation concerns Nick's neglectful mother, the cause of his subsequent troubles, being played by "an actress who looks like a *Playboy* bunny." If only Nick's father had deboned this bunny, she might have lost her *Playboy* look and become a nice domestic plaything.

Miss Lynch, I fear, is no cutting-edge director. She has cast two conspicuous no-talents in the leads. Julian Sands is a horse-faced British actor with a shoulder-length blond mane, whose voice drips with castor oil and whose manner is so mawkish and languid that the most pacific spectator would want to kick him. Sherilyn Fenn, the celebrated corpse from *Twin Peaks*, is so devoid of all ability that you wonder whether some previous surgeon might not have removed her cortex. In a meaningless supporting role, Art Garfunkle is his customary egregious self, but even such good actors as Bill Paxton and Kurtwood Smith are dragged down to Art's artistic level. And compared to Miss Lynch as screenwriter, Jackie Collins reads like Colette.

As I watched scene after flatfooted scene (is there no surgery for fallen arches?), I was reminded of one of Karl Kraus's apothegms: "Why do some people write? Because they don't have enough character not to write." The same applies to certain filmmakers, especially if they have powerful filmmaker fathers. □

ART

The Ruins of 42nd Street

JAMES GARDNER

'WHAT great ruins these will make!" H. G. Wells supposedly said when he first saw the New York skyline. Those who don't want to wait for Armageddon can savor a foretaste of those ruins in the wreck of 42nd Street between 7th and 8th Avenues. You will find here a paradoxical kind of death. For the street seems fully alive at every hour: twenty million people pass through it in a year. But do not be deceived. Few people actually go to 42nd Street to see 42nd Street. Having been belched up by the Port Authority, most of them pass through as fast as possible.

You would scarcely believe that this stretch of street, which your eye takes in at a glance, was once the Great White Way. How changed from the days of Ziegfeld and Belasco! All but one or two of its theaters are boarded up and ravaged by rust and decay. Only a filigree of metal chains decked with the gaudiest orange tape forbids the predations of addicts and the homeless. Unlike the ruins of Petra or Pompeii, which the passage of the centuries has restored to a kind of wholeness, 42nd Street is an unburied corpse.

You will find here a poignancy sadder than Baalbek and Carthage combined. For if those ruins bear witness to some former strength and greatness, 42nd Street is nothing more than the shadow of a shadow. It stands as a monument to the flimsiest kind of fakery—stage-paint, props, and paste-board masks conspiring to produce an evening's illusion. How absurdly grandiose and overblown are the names of its theaters: Empire, Liberty, Apollo, Victory. Their architecture is that of Imperial Rome engrafted onto the Paris of the Roi Soleil: flowery swags and pompous porticos, oeils de boeuf, fluted pilasters. A gilded Pandora leaps from the doors of one theater; another has Apollo and the Muses. In striking contrast to these heady fantasies are the real residents of 42nd Street: the pornographers who have not yet relocated a few blocks downtown, and the homeless who loiter beside the fire hydrants.

But recently a third creature has come to haunt the street. He lingers a little longer than the frightened and nervous out-of-towners, but he is clearly out of place himself. Generally white, well fed, and well dressed, even if in a vaguely Bohemian way, he has drifted north from SoHo and the East Village or south from 57th Street and the Upper East Side.

He is an emissary of the art world,

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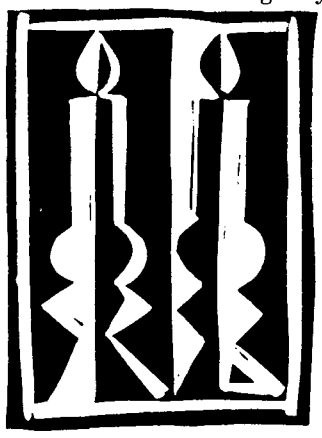
and what has drawn him to Times Square is a strange street exhibition of 21 "installation artists" (or teams of artists) sponsored by the municipally run 42nd Street Development Project and by a cultural group, naturally funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, calling itself Creative Time Inc. "42nd Street can be a symbol of the decadence of our culture," reads the official statement of purpose. "But in its fearsomeness and danger, can we also find hope? We can change the order of things, we can redevelop—and artists, with wit, wisdom, and passion, can help us do it."

In the context of contemporary art, these installations represent something of a generational conflict. From the Eighties comes the relative wholesomeness of the survivors of the East Village scene: Lady Pink with her day-glo graffiti images and John Ahearn with his plaster casts of the locals. Over against these, representing the spirit of the Nineties, is the corrosive irony of Neo-Conceptualist word art. Jenny Holzer emblazons the gauntlet of marquees with her "Truisms," such as "Murder has its sexual side" and "A man can't know what it's like to be a mother." In a nod to populism and the democratic spirit, Tibor Kalman and Scott Stowell have painted the word "Everybody" in huge letters across the police information center. Karen Finley's *Positive Attitude* covers the inside of an abandoned Nedicks with dreamy, lollipop-colored images of a naked woman, and drippy poetry of the sort scribbled in the diary of an adolescent girl. Only in the brochure that accompanies the show will you learn that the figure is supposed to be suffering from Kaposi's sarcoma.

Implicitly, however, there is another conflict: between the organizers and the artists. The exhibition was orchestrated in a spirit of hope, with the idea of redeeming urban decay through the therapeutic properties of art. But most of the artists seem to have been inspired by something other than hope, something that the arts community has lately been calling Abjection. This idea naturally has a French source, the writings of Julia Kristeva, the semiotician of the month. According to a recent Whitney exhibition devoted to Abject Art, "The concept of abjection, encompassing investigations of excess and degraded elements as they relate to the body and society, has emerged as a central theoretical notion of 1990s art." It concerns "that which is often deemed inappropriate to the conservative dominant culture."



Yet it was clear from that exhibition, as well as from this one on 42nd Street, that the artists did not reject abjection, but rather embraced it as a means of assailing the mainstream society of which 42nd Street is such a malign and nauseous parody. What charms the art world is the radically inassimilable nature of this and other similarly blighted urban landscapes, their standing reproach to a law-and-order world made for the bourgeoisie. Certain of the city officials I spoke with moved nervously around the point, as though, in pressing for the redevelopment of the jungle of 42nd Street, they wanted to raze the Brazilian rain forest, extinguish its fauna, and extirpate its noble and indigenous populations.

Ultimately, the works in the 42nd Street Art Project are no match for the environment in which they are set. What impresses the viewer is not so much the danger of the place—incarnated in its desperate addicts and loitering lunatics—as the utter corruption of its dreams, the abject, senseless vulgarity into which the trumpery of its theaters had sunk. One of the few effective works, *Mimesis* by Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel, eerily assembles rows of Salvation Army clothing behind the glass doors of one theater's lobby, sagging from hangers like soulless ghosts. As you press your face to the doors, the draft carries into your nostrils the oddly touching, not unpleasant smell of a hundred thousand hopes and illusions that came to nothing. Though not what is usually thought of as "the pleasure of ruins," in Rose Macaulay's phrase, nevertheless there is something undeniably moving about it all. But not so much that we should rue the prospect that, unlike the ruins of the Parthenon or Colosseum, all of this will soon be restored to its former glory by the great goddess Redevelopment, and so will be ruins no more. □

Mr. Gardner's book, Culture or Trash?, *will be published in December by Birch Lane.*

TELEVISION

Flawed Tragedy, Unfunny Comedy

MATTHEW SCULLY

VIEWED from any angle, the AIDS epidemic would seem a story sad enough to be told without exaggeration. A serious drama on the subject would strive simply to convey the depth of suffering, a big enough artistic challenge; to tell the story straight and let us sort out guilt and innocence in the quiet of our own hearts. If the aim is to evoke sympathy, to make us identify with the afflicted, then heavy-handed moralizing and morbid sentimentality are equally ruinous.

And the Band Played On—appearing on HBO September 17, 19, 22, 26, and 30—takes this human story and turns it into the familiar melodrama of outraged innocence, a bitter, brooding indictment of society. Like most artistic tributes to homosexuals stricken with AIDS, this one forbids us to think that the tragedy arose in part from tragic flaws. What could have been a thoughtful, nuanced drama turns out to be a kind of cinematic AIDS quilt, a security blanket for homosexual activists. All culpability is to be found in vague, sinister, faraway forces: callous politicians, indifferent bureaucrats, hate-mongering ministers, greedy bloodbanks, self-absorbed scientists, a stone-hearted public. And this from the folks who are forever warning others not to see the world in black and white.

Mr. Scully is a former speechwriter for Vice President Quayle and former associate literary editor at NR.

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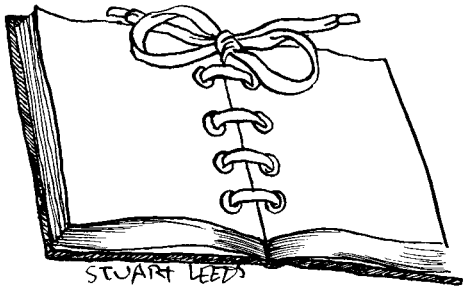
Based on the 1987 book by Randy Shilts, it chronicles the efforts of researchers from the Centers for Disease Control to find the cause of AIDS when the virus first appeared in the U.S. in 1981. Matthew Modine as the CDC researcher leading the effort does a fine job, conveying an emotional gravity elsewhere lacking in the film; Anjelica Huston as the doctor who first discovers the virus in a newborn is also convincing. (Though of course her deduction that this "proves the disease is not caused by lifestyle" is tendentious: from whom did the baby's mother get it, and how might that man have contracted it?) If the film had just stuck with this storyline—the drama of heroic scientists in pursuit of a life-saving discovery, along the lines of *The Race for the Double Helix* or even the old *Louis Pasteur* with Paul Muni—it would have made a fascinating movie.

Instead, except for a few brief flashes of fact, we are constantly reminded where the blame *really* lies. Young men lie dying as old footage of Ronald Reagan and Jerry Falwell flickers on the hospital TV, serving throughout the movie as a nightmarish backdrop. "Do you think Reagan's going to do a damn thing?" says one activist to an AIDS patient as they watch the President on the screen. "By 1984, President Reagan had not used the word 'AIDS,'" a somber postscript informs us. "By the time President Reagan delivered his first speech on the AIDS crisis, more than 25,000 Americans had died of the disease."

Surveying a decade of human wreckage, the producers and director have this great moral to offer: It was Reagan's fault—Reagan and various other remote, evil forces having nothing at all to do with drug use or homosexual promiscuity. Just as "the only Christian tragedy is damnation," as Dorothy L. Sayers observed, the only liberal tragedy is to be forsaken in one's hour of need by the government. It's as if Tolstoy had ended *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* not with Ivan humbly whispering, "I understand now"—that great moment when he sees beyond himself—but shouting, "Damn you all for not helping me!" with a postscript condemning the Czar for spending too little money for cancer research.

"Gays are human beings too," activist Bill Kraus (Ian McKellen) declares at one point, but it's the producers, scriptwriters, and actors themselves who need to be reminded of this. For the characters they give us are too often gauzy, guiltless figures bearing little resemblance to flesh-and-blood mortals. Talk about "dehumanizing": what slur on homosexuals could be more degrading than to portray them as child-like beings somehow removed from the painful moral tensions the rest of us experience?

In only one scene, when a gay choreographer charmingly played by Richard Gere is asked to estimate the number of men he has been with in the past year, is a homosexual character endowed with a capacity for introspection. "About 250 contacts," he replies, "and that's a conservative estimate. . . . I don't mind you knowing



these things about me. I'm not sure I want to know them about myself." It is the one politically incorrect (and emotionally correct) moment in a two-and-a-half-hour film when viewers, all with regrets and troubles of our own, recognize a fellow sinner.

Modine as the scientist Don Francis is the film's most compelling presence, perhaps in part because he plays the least ideological character. The fervent platitudes, the work of screenwriter Arnold Schulman, fall mostly to others in the cast for whom the whole production seems an almost religious experience: gay activist Bill Kraus, lent an improbable, Mr. Chips–like air by Ian McKellen; San Francisco health official Selma Dritz, played by the always grating Lily Tomlin; scientist Mary Guinan, soberly portrayed by Glenne Headly; and the "bathhouse" proprietor Papasano, a good fit for rock singer Phil Collins. (About these "bath" joints, yet another postscript informs us that they were all shut down in 1985; alas, one need only skim the classifieds of any gay newspaper to note that things are again in full swing.) As Dr. Robert Gallo, who steals research on the virus to make a name for himself, Alan Alda is too easy-going to be convincing as an egotistical credit hog. But he at least provides a sense of understatement in an otherwise relentlessly preachy melodrama.

■ ***Frasier***, a CBS spinoff of *Cheers* starring Kelsey Grammer, is the most hopeful entry of the new TV season and indeed a model of entertainment television at its best: devoid of serious social content, politically indifferent, and hilarious. The storyline of the premiere episode, which will have aired September 16, is almost exactly that of a new Fox comedy starring Don Rickles, ***Daddy Dearest***, a show exhibiting the traits of TV at its worst.

Both shows begin with a family breakup. Dr. Frasier Crane has moved to Seattle, his old hometown, to start afresh, leaving behind an unfaithful nag of a wife and his old *Cheers* buddies. There he finds solace in the quiet life and in a new job as talk-show psychologist. "My wife had just left me," he confides to a caller, "which was very painful. Then she came back to me, which was excruciating." An obvious enough line, but you have to imagine Grammer's perfect delivery as the sophisticated, anguished, high-strung buffoon.

The reason *Frasier* will last a while is simple. The character himself is funny. Put Frasier in almost any situation and some annoyance or humiliation awaits him, in the way one felt a laugh coming the moment Ted Knight as Ted Baxter or Jack Benny as himself walked into a room. The scene with his father moving in, hauling his ratty old armchair into Frasier's finely appointed apartment—arguing that it fits the "eclectic" theme—is priceless.

Daddy Dearest, by contrast, rivals *Roseanne* and *Married . . . with Children* in its sheer, unrelieved vulgarity. Unless I am mistaken, even the studio audience sounds a little stunned by the complete absence of wit or of a single endearing character.

Whether Rickles still keeps 'em rolling in the aisles at Vegas casinos, I have no idea, but his loud-mouth insults routine does not hold up in a sitcom, which might explain why he already has three failed ones to his credit. Still less appealing is Richard Lewis as Rickles's neurotic, recently

(Continues on page 68)

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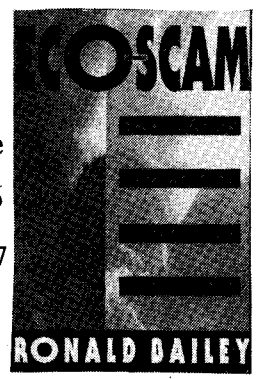

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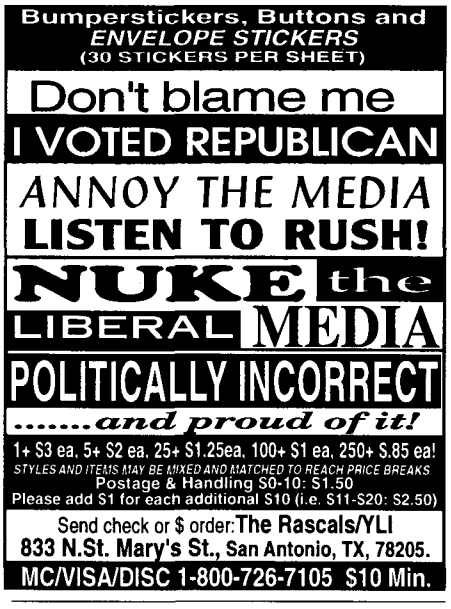
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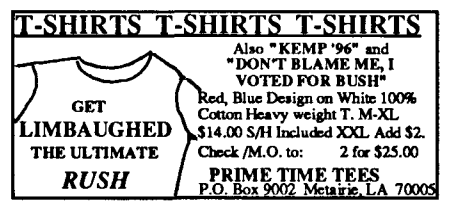
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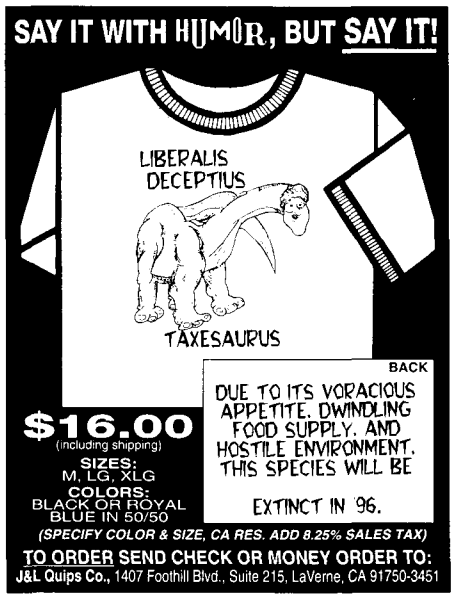
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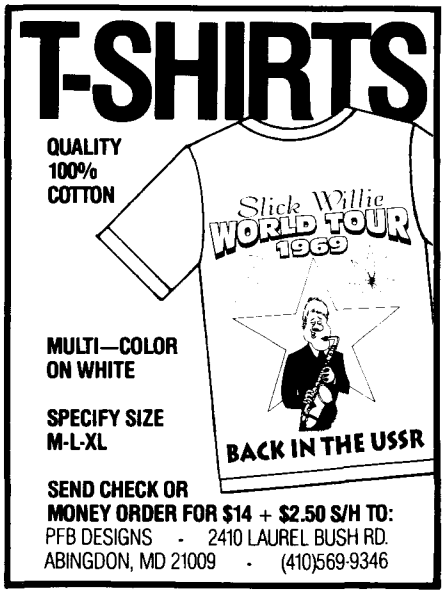
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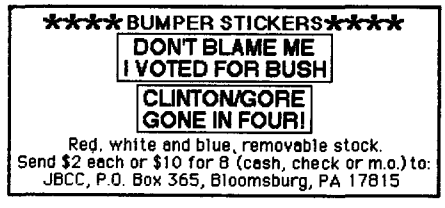
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SCULLY

(Continued from page 64)

divorced son, who, when the folks split up, has to take in Dad. And just when you think these are the two most unbearable people you have ever seen on TV, in walks the mother (Broadway actress Renee Taylor), bellowing her staggeringly tasteless lines about—what else?—her sexual appetites, as if trying to be heard by the ushers outside the theater door. "Well, okay, there goes *my* sex life," says her swinger son after hearing one of these. "I guess I'll just become a priest or something."

Rickles: "That might not be a bad idea. From what I hear they've been getting a lot of action lately."

This sidesplitter, writer and producer Billy Van Zant's idea of witty social commentary, is about as funny as it gets. Lewis's credits include the HBO comedy specials *I'm Doomed*, *I'm in Pain*, and *I'm Exhausted*—which uncannily foretell the viewer's range of emotions watching this frenzied, embarrassing spectacle. □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Solzhenitsyn and the Modern World, by Edward E. Ericson Jr. (Regnery, 433 pp., $24)

IT IS SAID of the Russian character that the ego is ever willing to vault across society, seeing itself as the universe. "I" becomes "We." The gibe misses a lot, but helps us to understand the moral vision of Alexander Solzhenitsyn at the core of Edward Ericson's meticulous new study. Solzhenitsyn's "We" are the people, not the wilted clichés of socialist cant, but the millions smeared by modern history and the spiritual sterility of modern life. That smearing has extended from Russia to the West, where Solzhenitsyn's diagnosis of modernity's fatal flaw—its "consciousness lacking all divine dimension"—has been dismissed as the ranting of an alien and a crank. Ericson's task is to rescue Solzhenitsyn from his critics; his defense is constructed on the most painstaking examination of Solzhenitsyn's moral, philosophical, and political tracts yet published. Democrat or demagogue? The debate about Solzhenitsyn's political instincts is ended by Ericson's scholarship. Faith is the source of Solzhenitsyn's democratic politics. Without it, "you have only a petty liberty that is only a caricature . . . Nobody is prepared to die for that." Authentic "human freedom is *inner* freedom, given to us by God: freedom to decide upon our own acts, as well as moral responsibility for them."

—KENNETH MURPHY

JOURNALISM LETTERS

(Continued from page 53)

can Journalism" issue ["A Modest Subculture"]. Applying his own preconceptions of what a younger writer must secretly be implying, Lipman mistook my appraisal of current economic realities for a malevolent devaluation of classical music throughout all history—a disavowal of the "guiding ideals of civilization," and by extension a snubbing of "Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare" (!). Has Lipman somehow confused me with Axl Rose? I profoundly regret that classical music now stands on the periphery of culture. If I felt otherwise, I'd be writing about something else.

Let me try this one more time. The big classical-music institutions are faced with a radically diminished social role. They have various options: 1) cheapen themselves with desperate lunges of publicity; 2) cling to what Lipman calls the "old terms" and blame everything on the *New York Times*; 3) adapt to the new role, focus on education, and advocate a livelier twentieth-century repertory in the hope that younger audiences will see classical music as a living organism. I find the third option most attractive, and therefore had some encouraging words in my otherwise ambivalent assessment of Leon Botstein. Enough said? I'd much rather be talking about music.

Incidentally, the Cleveland-based punk-rock band Pere Ubu does not favor an *accent grave*.

Alex Ross
Brooklyn, N.Y.

I wrote my description of the present state of classical music in a spirit of mourning; it seemed to me—and to many others who have read Mr. Ross's work, and who have followed the vastly diminished classical coverage of the New York Times*—that Mr. Ross wrote his with (shall we say) insouciance. I am glad to know that he feels so deeply about the fate of classical music. I look forward to seeing this feeling reflected in his reviews.* —SL

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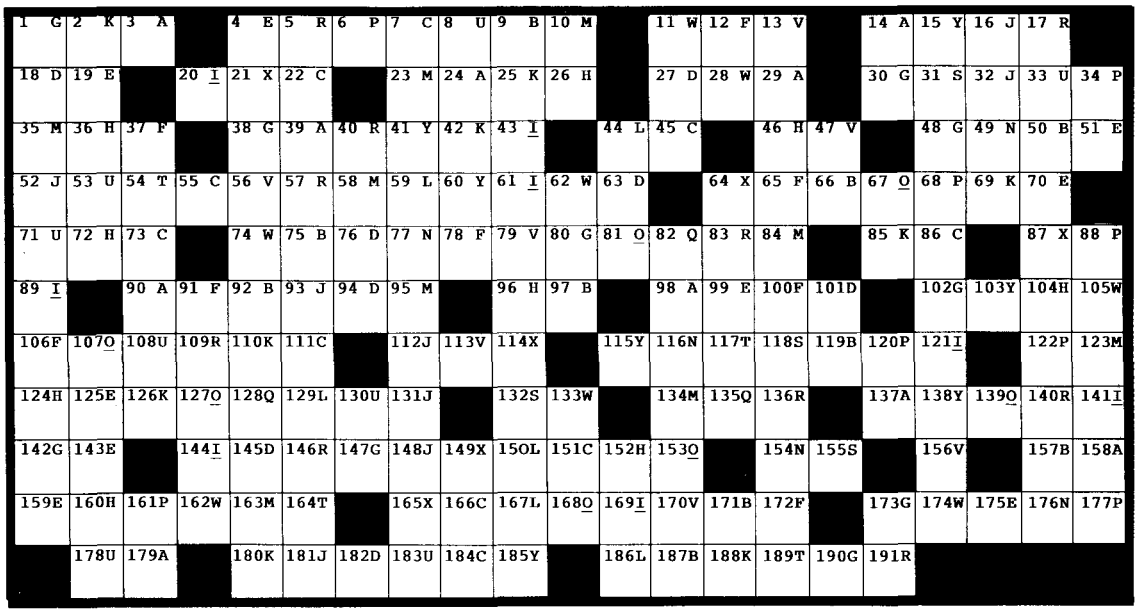
TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney



DEFINITIONS

A. Make-up table accessory (2 words) — 90 39 98 29 3 158 14 24 137 179

B. Charge — 187 92 66 75 157 171 97 119 9 50

C. Completely free — 55 7 86 111 45 22 151 166 184 73

D. Capitol Hill denizen — 101 145 182 27 63 18 76 94

E. One kind of music — 125 143 159 19 51 99 4 175 70

F. Capitol Hill newspaper (2 words) — 78 91 172 106 37 12 65 100

G. Politician's favorite speech — 102 80 48 147 38 1 142 190 173 30

H. Innate — 96 72 26 124 36 152 160 46 104

I. Gently, but with a bit of spice — 144 169 20 121 89 141 61 43

J. Earth's is daily — 148 181 112 16 52 93 32 131

K. Group in the pit — 85 180 42 2 126 25 110 188 69

L. Caribbean "hideaway" of note — 186 129 150 44 59 167

M. Pleasure — 123 163 23 58 95 35 84 10 134

N. Popular dinner fare—and how to cook it — 116 49 154 176 77

O. Seduced — 153 67 168 127 81 107 139

P. Expensive kind of spree — 177 88 34 122 161 6 120 68

Q. John Olerud specialty, this season — 135 82 128

R. Indiana city — 140 146 109 17 191 83 57 40 5 136

S. Small boat — 155 31 132 118

T. Noted Japanese admiral — 54 117 164 189

U. Infanticide, euphemistically — 71 183 178 108 8 53 130 33

V. Ancient city of Lycia — 13 156 170 56 113 79 47

W. Doomed — 162 174 62 133 28 11 105 74

X. See — 149 21 87 64 165 114

Y. Serac's locale — 115 15 60 103 41 138 185

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

Solution to Last Issue's Trans-O-Gram. MARIANNE MEANS: *Camelot Lost*: "Sen. Edward Kennedy now falls into the category of harmless celebrity, like some famous rock star. The Teddy reality is that he is not taken seriously. His run at the White House was a disaster. . . . (H)is impact upon legislation has been limited."

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What Ails the GOP?

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 6

The interest in Ross Perot perseveres, and itinerant pundits are everywhere asked: What will happen to the two-party system?

Traditionally, as we all know, a third party that heaves in with an attractive platform suffers ideological piracy. Norman Thomas ran six times for President, and he loved best about his later campaigns to be able to say that he was running out of reforms to propose, because the Democratic Party was adopting them all one by one.

What is different about Ross Perot is that he doesn't really put forward a comprehensive ideological alternative. If one were to blindfold a Perot supporter and ask, What is Ross's primary objective? he would be likely to answer, To balance the budget. If one were then to ask, How does he propose to do this? the pollee would probably spend the rest of his life in darkness before coming out with anything more than a fifty-cent tax on gasoline. When Mr. Perot himself was asked that question in a recent televised interview he replied huffily that if he had known he was going to be asked such questions, he'd have brought along his "charts." It is a little as though Abraham Lincoln, asked whether he favored emancipation for the slaves, had answered that if he had known he'd be asked so complicated a question, he'd have brought along his notes.

What causes the longevity of Ross Perot is three things. The first, his capacity to buy all the time he wants. Second, his court-jester personality, which attracts audiences that like political entertainment. Third, the dissatisfaction with Mr. Clinton's programs, and with the programs associated with George Bush in his last years in office.

A finding recently published in the *Political Science Quarterly* suggests that the plight of the American conservative is parlous. Self-identification as a conservative dropped by 14 per cent among Republicans after the Houston convention, and dropped by 20 per cent among whites making more than $50,000 per year. The authors of the study conclude, "This sharp decline among self-described white conservatives in 1992 may be partly attributed to the connotations the label 'conservative' took on with the rhetoric heard at the Republican convention in Houston."

The invitation is to suppose that the problem is the fire-and-thunder of Pat Buchanan at Houston and the influence of the Religious Right within the Republican Party. One analyst adds to the above the feeling by the middle class that they are being robbed by the (financial) upper class. If there is such a feeling, then that attests to the success of the rhetoric of President Clinton, who can't utter the word "rich" without a snarl on his face, or the phrase "middle class" without suggesting that it is the great plundered class in America, starving to death in order to bloat Donald Trump.

There is of course no protection against ignorance. If Mr. Clinton has persuaded the American people that the tax acts of 1981, 1982, 1986, and 1990 were at the expense of the middle class, then we have one more documented success of the Big Lie. But the psephologists are asking an interesting question when they explore whether the Republican Party should drop the social agenda, which is the imputed position of the anti-Houstonians.

The orthodox defense points to the electoral achievements of Ronald Reagan, who never dodged his opposition to abortion, his belief in a temperate First Amendment that does not disqualify the use of the word "God" in the schools, and his apparent indifference to gay rights. The last time around, he won every state except Minnesota.

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But the Opposition tells us that the public mood is changing. That the abortion issue, for one, has gone over to the Choice lobby, and that there is a mobilizing resentment of anti-gay measures. Governor Weld of Massachusetts is held out as the Republican who totally understands that the party must excrete all its ties with the old social agenda.

There is of course a difficulty that doesn't immediately translate into popularity figures, and that is that the Republican Party likes to think of itself as at least to a significant extent governed by normative declarations that some things should be done because it is right to do them, some things should not be done because it is wrong to do them. The moment you talk that way, you appeal to non-instrumental factors; but that tends to be the means by which heavy wars are fought and won. □

Dealing With The Enemy

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 3

Developments in the Mideast, which are grounds for cautious jubilation, are yet another historical reminder that reality tends to impose itself, bringing stage-set drama to earth, and overriding righteous commitments. It would have been thought inconceivable, at the end of the Korean War or even a decade later, that Richard Nixon (of all people) would go to Peking to pay court to Mao Tse-tung. It was thought inconceivable that any French government could survive open negotiations with the FLN, which asserted its claims for Algerian independence by slaughtering French men, women, and children playing on Algerian beaches. Up until not very long ago, the African National Congress was an illegal organization in South Africa; its chief, Nelson in jail. Nelson Mandela is nowadays exhorting his followers to renounce terrorism.

It was only five years ago that Rita Hauser, a Jewish Republican lawyer-politician-statesman from New Jersey, traveled with two confederates to Stockholm to meet with a representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization. Although some friends of Israel applauded her initiative, the majority thought her to have seriously breached the hard position of Israel, which officially banned

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any dealings with the PLO. Andrew Young, when our ambassador to the United Nations a dozen years ago, met secretly with a member of the PLO and lost substantially the support of his vociferous constituency. And now the democratically elected government of Israel, led by a former general victorious in the great war of 1967, is about to conclude a deal with the PLO modest in concrete terms, revolutionary in its implications.

Granted, the PLO has come a long way, and in the right direction, because of events not all of its own making—primarily the end of the Cold War. Soon after the inception of the state of Israel, the Soviet Union elected to oppose it at every turn. The PLO became, if not strictly speaking its agent, at least the executive of Soviet strategic designs. Syria, a client state of the Soviet Union, found itself, after the collapse of the Berlin Wall, without a placenta to the great northern superpower. And then Mr. Arafat made the fateful move of backing Saddam Hussein in his war against Kuwait. This had the most desirable effect of alienating Saudi Arabia, which had served as the principal treasurer of the PLO. With the relative weakening of Arafat's PLO, the hardliners began to press, threatening Arafat's leverage.

And so he decided that the time had come to make organic concessions. And his mood coincided with that of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. The biggest stake for Israel is what it has asked for since 1948, namely forthright recognition of its right to exist as a homeland for world Jewry.

We learn yet again what we know intuitively, which is that one has to deal with the people who have the power. It is entirely in order to speculate on how many people died who might not have, if Franklin Roosevelt had sacrificed the satisfaction of declaring in Casablanca that we were engaged in a war that could end only in unconditional surrender. We cannot know what the madman Hitler might have done, but the lives of several million human beings might have been saved. The Japanese would not give us unconditional surrender: they required assurance that the emperor would not be overthrown. We gave them that assurance, which was a fair exchange for the 250,000 U.S. infantrymen it was assumed would die if we needed to storm Japan. Those of us given to pride, see in pride an honorable fountain of moral energy. But pride can be very expensive of others' welfare. If the South Africans can deal with the ANC and the Israelis with the PLO, maybe we should consider an advance on Castro's Cuba. If Castro were willing to give up what Arafat appears ready to give up, that would be the equivalent of giving up Communism. There is no way Castro can expunge the sins he has committed, but even as it is not proposed that Arafat go to Tel Aviv to break bread with Israelis, we would not need to invite Castro to the World Series. □

Foul Play

NEW YORK, AUGUST 30

It is all very well, and we should continue to do it, to speak of the evanescence of color, as Dr. Martin Luther King did thirty years ago last week. That ought to be the paradigm, but must not blind us to reality, and reality teaches us that fear of racial disruption is translating into injustice. For a change, the victims of such injustice are white men. In the instant case, they are two white former officers of the Los Angeles Police Department, one of whom had accumulated one hundred commendations for exemplary conduct—up until the time his path crossed that of Rodney King.

The sentencing judge, Mr. Davies, gave the two police officers moderate sentences—two and one half years; he might have hit them with as much as ten years—and carefully gave the grounds for acting as he did. First, the provocation of Rodney King. He had, after all, led the pursuing police on a wild chase through the streets and highways of Los Angeles and, when stopped and confronted, refused at first to submit. The critical judicial point became: How do you justify the beating of Rodney King after he reached the exact point at which it was manifest that he had in fact ceased resisting? The two juries (remember, there were two trials) looked at the videotape time and time again. I do not have the frame numbers in mind, but let us hypothesize that at 18 seconds, the jurors concluded that King had stopped resisting—but the beatings went on until 23 seconds. The guilt, then, was over 5 seconds of inexcusable conduct by two officers who, however, were acting as many might expect they'd themselves have acted under similar circumstances. Said the judge: The whole picture here demands judicial notice, which he gave it.

Then, said the judge, there was the matter of the other trial. At that trial, the defendants had been exonerated. That exoneration brought on the riots in Los Angeles. The riots caused President Bush to order the Justice Department to have another go at the police officers, so they were charged with violating the civil rights of Rodney King, which is a separate offense from the original charge of beating up a citizen. Said the judge: We lawyers know that in fact it's okay to try on a second offense, if the second offense is a discrete law. If you break and enter to kidnap a baby and while you are at it steal the father's wallet, you have committed two offenses, each triable separately, though routinely they are tried together. Trying the two offenses in Los Angeles together was procedurally difficult inasmuch as the civil-rights offense was federal, the mayhem offense, state.

Even so, said the judge, there is a perception of double jeopardy. And of course he was right. What the American public saw was in effect a reproduction, under a different judge, before a different jury, of the identical episode, except that this time, civil rights were emphasized. That perception suggested persecution, and the public sense that no injustice is being performed is a responsible criterion for shaping justice.

And then—Judge Davies's third point—the two defendants had sterling records as police officers, and that record is properly consulted in mitigation.

So? The idiots in Washington, specifically Solicitor General Drew Days, reacting to outraged cries by members of the black community who hoped to see the two officers electrocuted or gassed, announce that the government will appeal the sentence as being too lenient. Thirty-six months in prison, a lost career, public infamy, penury from legal defense bills, is too light a sentence for the mistreaters of Rodney King. The Justice Department has made one solid contribution to the polarization of racial sentiments in Southern California.

It isn't as if both sides in the dispute are getting equal attention. A few days before the Justice Department's decision to appeal, a notice—Associated Press, Los Angeles. "Rodney King was arrested today on a drunken driving charge after he crashed his car into a wall, the police said. . . . Mr. King was released on his own recognizance. Mr. King has been arrested several times since he was beaten by white police officers on March 3, 1991, although no charges have been filed. . . . On June 26, 1992, Mr. King was arrested after his wife told the police she had been injured in a domestic dispute. The police determined there was insufficient evidence to book Mr. King." There'd be insufficient evidence for the Los Angeles police to book Mr. King if he shot the mayor tomorrow. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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Charge of the Couch Brigade

MY VCR departed this life the other day, so I went on a search for a personal grail: a machine that I could teach to record television shows.

The puzzle of programming a VCR has been a running national gag for several years, a staple of stand-up routines and newspaper humor columns, like George Burns's age or Warren Beatty's concupiscence. It's an odd gag, when you think about it—a celebration of national incompetence. The VCR is a basic household appliance, found in 70 per cent of American homes. Surveys show that 71 per cent of those Americans "consider recording programs a very important feature of the VCR." Yet fewer than one in five actually use it so. Because, presumably, they can't.

The problem extends beyond VCRs. Consumers buy rotisserie microwaves but can cook only on full power with the frozen item at a standstill. Owners of programmable CD players can play tracks in serial order only, enduring all eight minutes of "Revolution No. 9" whenever they play the White Album. Budding Brubecks take home $200 electronic keyboards tricked out with 89 different rhythms, and then are forever condemned to play samba versions of "Heart and Soul" because they can't change the beat.

Meanwhile, sales of videodisk machines, which can't be programmed, continue to soar—because, say industry experts, they provide first-rate picture and sound. In fact, disk players are popular because they can't be programmed. They eliminate the temptation to screw up. There's no chance of playing back a miscued tape while your children look on in contempt, no digital display flashing "12:00" beneath the TV set, illuminating your ineptitude like a nightlight from hell.

"On-screen programming" was once boomed as the cure for the programming problem. The actual gain has been quite small. Where once the VCR owner became confused and angry while crouching before his machine, hamfistedly poking the programming buttons on his console, he now becomes confused and angry while lounging comfortably on the couch, remote control in hand. The industry counters with more technology. VCR Plus, recently made standard on some models, lets the VCR record shows for you; you have only to punch in a number found in newspaper TV listings. The nuisance of human involvement is kept to a minimum. No longer do you have to know the date, the day of the week, the time of day, *even the name of the show*. VCR Plus could be used in a lobotomy ward. A totally smart machine . . . for a totally stupid populace.

The queerness of the dilemma is undeniable. This is America, the country that put a man on the moon and brought Communism to its knees. Yet our new machines must be outfitted for a nation of Cousin Jethroes. The problem, I think, lies in the nature of modern technology. For two centuries any mechanically minded man, given time, could master the workings of a machine. Machines were linear; cause and effect were traceable to the comfortable truths of Isaac Newton. You pushed a button and wheels turned, gears engaged, levers dropped, pinions whirred, *a* to *b* to *c*; you took the cover off and watched every move. Frustration could still run very high, for after you'd detached each nut from every bolt and had the parts spread about you like Tutankhamen's loot you still might not be able to figure out what was wrong—or put it back together. In that case you called in the expert. But only after making the manful attempt.

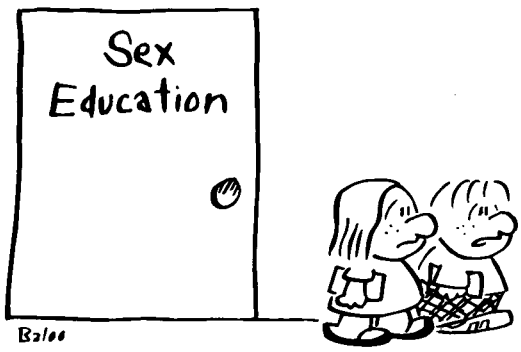
Electronics and the silicon chip forever altered the relation of a man to his machine; they robbed us of the chance to make the manful attempt. Electricity is the closest thing to a mystical force observable in the world—and it's not even observable. Among microcircuits the span between cause and effect is dark as pitch, unbridgeable, a vast and empty space. Push a button now and numbers flash on a screen; but how? In three hours *The Honeymooners* may or may not have been recorded while you were at dinner. But again: How? The only people who know for sure are at Cal Tech, and they're too busy to tell you. If they could. Which they can't.

BARRED from the freemasonry of the microcosm, older Americans rebel. (The generation under 25, for whom video literacy is the only available kind, are less susceptible to the programming confusion.) Except it's less a rebellion than a dead-man's float. Men who jury-rigged tanks while Panzer divisions fell upon them now groan from the couch, supine, because they can't make a $300 machine perform its simplest task. And they give up. In the contest between man and machine the white hanky is limply waved.

As an optimist, and an American, I remain convinced that there's nothing in our despair that a good exhortation can't fix. Let us drop the hanky and hoist the banner. The contest perdures; the battle is again afoot. Let us take as our hero John Henry, who with unbending will shrugged off despair and grabbed hammer and steel bit and in a blaze of smoke and choking fire challenged the mighty steam drill—and won!

Of course he croaked almost immediately. But at least we'll be lying down.

—ANDREW FERGUSON



"Wow! And I thought arithmetic *was a crazy idea."*

Mr. Ferguson is a writer living in Washington, D.C.

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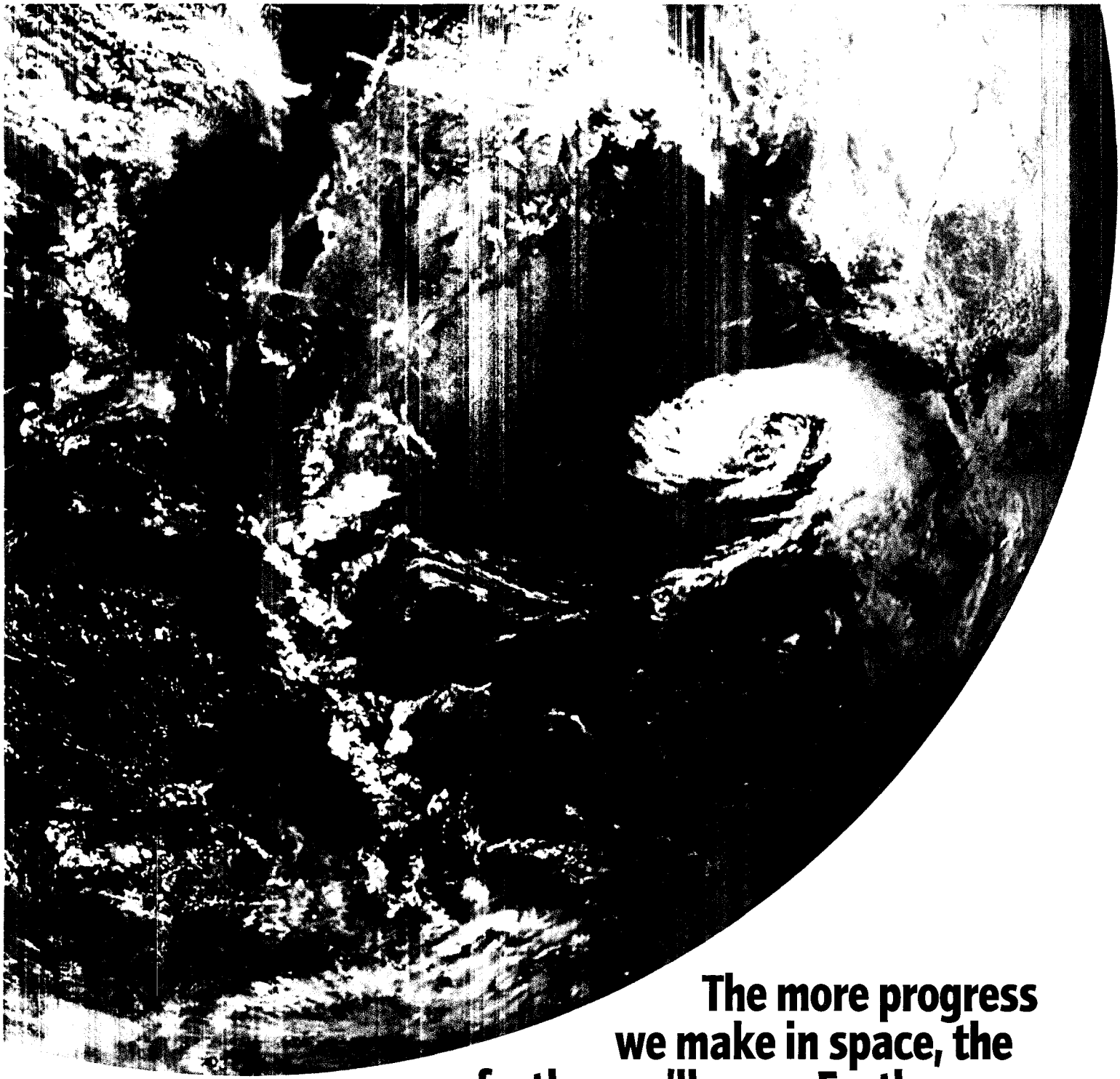

A view of the United States as seen from space.
Photo courtesy of NASA.

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